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hazzanut in the 20th century and beyond

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The Issue of Hazzanut in the 20th Century and Beyond: A Hyphenated Cantorate?

This issue spotlights cantors who helped fashion hazzanut in the 20th century, beginning with the ones who flourished from 1910 to 1940, an era that has been dubbed “The Golden Age of Hazzanut.” One might also refer to that group in Mishnaic terms, amending the vocalization of *Dor hamidbar* (“The Generation of the *Wilderness*”; Mishnah Sanhedrin 9.3) to read: *Dor ham’daber* (“The Generation that still *speaks* to us”).

Its heyday (**BLAZE OF DAY**) coincided with the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews to America early in the last century, when star “cantors were elevated... into local and, occasionally, national celebrities.”¹

A lack of available funds during the Great Depression of the 1930s squelched thoughts of congregations continuing to engage high-salaried cantors. World War II (**DARKNESS AT NOON**) and its annihilation of European Jewry along with its *sh’lihei tsibbur*, precluded any concern other than the global effort to defeat Fascism. In its aftermath, the earlier efflorescence of high hazzanic art was bravely imitated but could hardly be equaled by American-born cantors whose ties to Europe and its old-fashioned religious folkways had all but disappeared along with those of their constituents.

The 1950s and 1960s (**GOLDEN SUNSET**) witnessed Conservative Judaism’s greatest spurt of growth as it successfully accommodated the requirements of tradition to the preferences of modernity. Its services—featuring mixed seating—initially retained most of the Orthodox liturgy, led by a cantor and often accompanied by mixed choir. In the 1970s a generation came of age, that was meagerly versed in Jewish religious practice and even less so in the Hebrew language. By the time they assumed congregational leadership roles, “the cantor’s role as an emblematic figure for the larger community in dramas of American Jewish life”² had all but faded from collective memory. So too, in synagogues where hazzanic chant at the prayer Amud had supplied the motive force in worship, it was now usurped by rabbinic speech from the preaching pulpit.

1 Jeffrey Shandler, *Jews, God, and Videotape: Religion and Media in America* (New York and London: New York University Press), 2009: 24.

2 Shandler, op. cit., p. 51.

At the heart of hazzanut had been its emotional pull, a world apart from intellectually driven synagogue experience. One of Conservative Judaism's leading thinkers, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, cautioned his colleagues against allowing this to happen:

Unfortunately, some rabbis seem to think that their task is to teach popular *Wissenschaft* (Science of Judaism), and as a result some services are conducted as if they were adult education programs. Dwelling on the historical aspects they discuss, for example, the date of composition of the prayers, the peculiarities of their literary form or the supposedly primitive origin of some of our laws and customs. What about the spirit of prayer? ... Explanation kills inspiration.³

What originally had been intended as a well-meant signal to synagogue newcomers that a new section of the liturgy was about to begin, has mushroomed into a total distortion of the dynamic that had always driven Jewish worship: spontaneous interplay between a designated prayer leader and those being led. Services have evolved into a non-stop series of directives: "We rise," "We are seated," "We turn to page such and such," "We join together in reading," "We join together in singing," "We join together in chanting," one leader of a so-called "Friday Night Alive!" experience proclaimed just before the final strophe of *L'kha Dodi*: "we now rise and dance spontaneously in the aisles."⁴

Inanities like the foregoing, delivered not by a prayer-leading hazzan, but by a rabbi whose primary function until the mid-19th century had been to lead study and legislate halakhah, were avoided over the centuries, and for good reason. A worshiper's unconscious mind will resist any attempt to engage it directly. Prayer best approaches the unconscious *indirectly*, even seductively. As psychiatrist Milton H. Erickson taught: "A person cannot respond spontaneously if he is following a directive."⁵ Over a millenium earlier, the Midrash had arrived at a similar conclusion: "A community cannot be compelled to act against its own will."⁶

3 Abraham Joshua Heschel, "The Spirit of Jewish Prayer" *Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly of America*, Vol. 17, 1953: 170.

4 The writer's personal recollection of a guest rabbinical student imported by Conservative Congregation Beth Zion-Beth Israel of Philadelphia from the nearby Reconstructionist Rabbinical College for this special occasion.

5 Jay Haley, *Uncommon Therapy: The Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson, M.D.* (New York: Norton), paperback edition, 1993: 21.

6 *Sifra*, commentary on Leviticus 22: 29, *Emor*, 10: "Offer of your own free will."

A cantor's rhapsodic chant—with its meaningful allusions to other moments in people's lives—developed as a means of skirting that reflexive impasse. It offered fleeting musical references that were ignored on any conscious level of awareness but picked up by the scanning mechanism of our unconscious where they joined a host of inchoate feelings that lay buried deep within our psyches. There they invited those otherwise unutterable feelings to reveal themselves while enabling us to connect with them. At that instant the present moment and its distractions temporarily faded from consciousness as worshipers get in touch with their inner selves. Whatever instructions now issue forth from the Bimah interfere with that emergent awareness of our ultimate place in God's universe. Such supplementary remarks do not simply interfere with the flow of worship, they stop it dead in its tracks.

The consequent fragmentation of services left the professional cantorate in a generation-long state of limbo from which it had just begun to emerge, when a shrunken economic and demographic climate led to an inevitable dearth of openings for full-time professional cantors (**PALE DUSK**).⁷ The shortage of positions is serious enough to warrant reconsidering the multiple nature of cantorial function throughout history. At various times in the past the hazzan served as synagogue prayer leader, community surrogate in prayer, officer of the judiciary, preacher, judge, Bible reader, scribe, ritual slaughterer, teacher of Bible and Mishnah, and officiator at birth- circumcision-marriage-and-death.⁸ Current circumstances, especially in smaller communities, would suggest the imminent return of a dual ministry for the hazzan—whether cantor-educator, cantor-executive director, cantor-pastor or cantor-music director. This would be anything but an innovation; a multi-faceted hazzanic function had first emerged in the Middle Ages, and persisted into the mid-19th century in Eastern Europe as well as the United States.⁹

To conclude on a brighter note, audience reaction to a recent cantorial graduate's Masters recital on the subject of David Roitman and Joseph Shlisky, presented at HUC's School of Sacred Music, gives evidence that elements of virtuostic hazzanic style from almost a century ago are indeed retrievable:

Daniel Mutulu sang eight full-length compositions in Ashkenazic pronunciation, with the exact dialect of each hazzan imitated perfectly.

7 Sue Fishkoff, "Singing the Blues? Economy Declining, Membership Putting the Pinch on Cantors;" "Last Huzzah for Chazzans? Orthodox Cantors Face Diminishing Opportunities," *Jewish News Weekly of Northern California*, September 26, 2008.

8 Joseph A. Levine, "A Modest Synagogue Proposal," *Midstream*, August/September 1984: 40-4.

9 Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, VII (New York: Columbia University Press), 1958: 81.

The result was a transportation of everyone in that room to a different place and time.

To me, this was an important moment in the history of the American cantorate. That a young person could achieve this without having grown up in the milieu is revolutionary. This was not someone simply replicating a few flashy *dreydlekh*; the man tapped into the true art of hazzanut. Every *t'nuah* was executed perfectly, both vocally and with proper *kavvanah*.

When it was over, the room exploded in a way I had never seen it explode before. If this young man could elicit that kind of reaction as a novice, it's hard to imagine the impact his art will have once he begins to channel the Old Masters' insights through *his own* unique personality.

To this report by HUC faculty member Hazzan Jack Mendelson,¹⁰ we must add the fact that “cantorial music is growing more public among Hasidim, whose services typically emphasize ardor rather than vocal flourish.”¹¹ Aside from acquiring CDs of restored recordings by old-timers like Yossele Rosenblatt, writes correspondent Joseph Berger in *The New York Times*, “many Hasidim... sneak away from their own synagogues to hear... the cantor at a non-Hasidic synagogue.”¹² Not only that, but as British cantorial aficionado David Prager¹³ wrote recently,

... there has emerged a veritable wave of highly gifted, mainly Hasidic cantors, some trained in Israel as a result of the devoted work of teachers such as Eli Jaffe and Naftali Herstik.¹⁴ The new cantorial stars include Yitzchok Meir Helfgott whose fame enabled him to fill New York's Metropolitan Opera House, Yaakov Yosef Stark, Zalman Wirtzberger, Techezkel Klang, Yaakov Rosenfeld, Zalman Baumgarten, and Yehoshua Samuels. Their appearances, often in Hassidic garb with full beards and *peyes* (sidelocks), coupled with their traditionally authentic East European pronunciation of Hebrew, seem to generate an additional natural affinity with cantors of old.

The 21st century's first decade has witnessed the emergence of CD recordings featuring successful collaborations of cantors with jazz-and-classical musicians: Aaron Bensoussan with Uri Caine in *Urlicht/Primal Light*¹⁵ (an

10 Excerpt from Jack Mendelson, posting on Hazzanet, March 17, 2008; subject: *A Hazzanic Golden Age—Redux*.

11 Joseph Berger, “Bit by Electronic Bit, a Cantor's Voice Is Restored,” *The New York Times*, July 21, 2010.

12 Idem.

13 David R. Prager, “The Hasidic Word of Hazzanut—Seen by an Analytic Cantor-holic,” *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Fall, 2009: 113-114.

14 Those interested further in this aspect should consult—www.taci.org.il—the [website of the Tel Aviv Cantorial Institute](http://www.taci.org.il).

15 Music Edition Winter & Winter, Munich, 1997.

interweaving of hazzanut and movements from Mahler symphonies); Alberto Mizrahi with David Chevan on *Yizkor/The Afro American Experience*¹⁶ (Music of memory set to jazz rhythms); and a currently envisioned project of “bringing together Yitzchok Meir Helfgott and Izhak Perlman, hoping it will get Ashkenazic khazones back into the mainstream.”¹⁷ From these developments one might even conclude that there is reason to hope for the future of hazzanut in the coming decades.

JAL

In the November 1979 issue of *JSM* (9.3), a mistaken attribution was given for the following poem. We are pleased to reprint it here with the correct name of its author, and to note that a Centennial edition of Hayim Plutzik’s poetry, *Apples From Shinar*, is being published this year by Wesleyan University Press.

IF CAUSALITY IS IMPOSSIBLE, GENESIS IS RECURRENT

**The abrupt appearance of a yellow flower
Out of the perfect nothing, is miraculous.
The sum of Being, being discontinuous,
Must presuppose a God-out-of-the-box
Who makes a primal garden out of each garden.
There is no change, but only re-creation
One step ahead. As in the cinema
Upon the screen, all motion is illusory.
So if your mind were keener and could clinch
More than its flitting world flashing and dying
Projected out of a tireless, winking Eye
Opening and closing in immensity—
Creating, with its look, beside all else
Always Adamic passion and innocence,
The bloodred apple or the yellow flower.**

Hyam Plutzik (1912-1962)

16 Available at <<www.chevan.addr.com>>.

17 Hankus Netsky, in an emailed communication to the editor, August 6, 2010.

Blaze of Day

Setting the Stage:

when Salomon Sulzer
(1804-1890)

met Pinchas Minkowsky
(1859-1924)



By Akiva Zimmermann¹

The influence that Salomon Sulzer had over European communities east and west would carry over well into the 20th century. Coincidental with his retirement, the first cantorial organization was founded in Vienna (1881), as well as the first cantorial periodical (*Kantoren Zeitung*). The latter merged with *Varheit* in 1899, and both the organization and the periodical lasted until Austria's *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany in 1938. Sulzer's *Schir Zion* part I, the first cantorial thesaurus to be published in Vienna, had appeared in 1839, and engendered a host of similar collections over the next 100 years.

In addition to being a hazzan of the first rank, Pinchas Minkowsky also researched Jewish music and wrote numerous articles that have yet to be included in a volume devoted to hazzanut and its origins. He was blessed not only with a mellifluous lyric tenor voice and impeccable musicianship,

1 *Vienna—the City of Cantors (Toldot ha-hazzanut b'vinah)*, Tel Aviv: B'ron Yahad, 2009, pp. 103-105, tr. JAL. Akiva Zimmermann is a much sought-after lecturer and journalist. His most recent JSM article, "The Hasidic World's Attitude towards Hazzanut," appeared in the FALL 2009 issue.

but also with a felicitous literary style. Collections of his “Papers” (*R’shumot*), that were published first in Odessa and later in Tel-Aviv, focus on his work in Jewish folklore, and were edited by Alter Druyananov, Chaim Nachman Bialik and Yehoshua Chana Ravnitzky.

In an autobiographical section, Minkowsky tells of his adventures in the world of hazzanut and about his cantorial teachers and mentors. He often mentions Salomon Sulzer and the influence that pioneering modern cantor still exerted two generations later.

When Minkowsky was appointed cantor in Khershon (Ukraine), he was sent to Vienna—at the community’s expense—to study with Sulzer and to acquire a thorough knowledge of European culture. With a sharp pen, Minkowsky describes the Viennese cantors he heard, as well as the way services were conducted in that city. He tells how Sulzer’s former students brought the Master’s compositions and performance style to the cities of Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, by the time Minkowsky arrived in Vienna, Sulzer was already retired, his post now filled by Joseph Singer (1841-1911). Minkowsky writes:

Not for the sake of Singer and his like did my spirit move me to leave Khershon and journey to Vienna, but for the sake of Sulzer himself, the man from whose mouth a new approach had gone forth to all corners of the diaspora. One day, after inquiring at the Kehillah² headquarters as to the exact hours that Sulzer entertained visitors, I stood at the door of his dwelling and rang the bell. His daughter, a professor of piano, opened the door and invited me into a drawing-room that opened right off the corridor. I felt my heart beat excitedly within me; I was about to face Sulzer, who had previously been revealed to me only in dreams.

After a minute or so, Sulzer entered the room. I saw standing before me a distinguished older gentleman, rather tall, his face cleanly shaven, his long wild hair white as snow and soft as silken threads. He wore a black robe that reached the soles of his shoes. Through his spectacles peered eyes that seemed to bore into the innermost recesses of my being.

He remained silent for moment and then, in a tone of voice both charming and pleasant, asked:

Whom do I have the pleasurable honor of welcoming to my humble home?

Trying with all my might to reign in my racing emotions, I replied:

I am the hazzan of Kershon, and my congregation has sent me to the renowned Professor, that I might hear Zion’s Songs issuing forth from the mouth of their creator.

2 Municipally recognized “Jewish Religious Community.”

Sit down, my son, I am happy to have you here. Furthermore, you know that I hold the Khershon congregation in highest regard; this is the second time it has sent me its hazzan. I still remember Wolf Shestapol³ as a young man; he was extraordinarily talented. Still, I am of the opinion that it is not the hazzanim who need to be sent here, but the Russian congregations themselves! For, of what use is it to train hazzanim, when the congregations retain their corrupt taste? And as for you, my son (he added with a sigh), I regret that it's a bit late in the game. By now I've grown old, no longer able to sing—or even to demonstrate. And from Singer and Schiller⁴ I'm afraid you will learn very little... Have you heard Singer?

Yes, sir, I have.

And what is your opinion?

I only wish that I hadn't heard him! Couldn't the Vienna Temple find a more suitable successor to the creator of a New Song for Israel?

A faint smile played upon Sulzer's lips as he said:

Of course it could. But it chose not to do so for reasons that are well known.⁵

Then Sulzer began asking me about the status of hazzanim in Russia, about how his former students were doing, and about the condition of Russian Jewry in general. He opened a large cabinet which housed testimonials of various sorts that he'd received from monarchs and officials in many European countries. Among these were two gold medals from Tsar Alexander II of Russia, a statuette from the French government, and so on and so on...

After his tenure in Khershon ended, the Ukrainian-born Minkowsky went on to serve in Lemberg and Odessa. He spent three years at the Kahal Adas Yeshurun in New York (1888-1891), and was recalled to Odessa as chief cantor of the Brody Synagogue, an office he held for 30 years while collaborating with choirmaster/music director David Nowakowsky (1848-1921) in perfecting what became a benchmark for the East European Khorshul tradition. Minkowsky played a prominent role in Odessa's flourishing intellectual life. He lectured at the Jewish Conservatory, chaired the Hazamir Musical

3 Already deceased at this time, Shestapol (1831-1872) had, after his studies with Sulzer, established the so-called *Khorshul*—or chorally supported—order of service in Khershon and was thereafter known as *Velvele Khershoner*. The melody by which he is best known, a perennial congregational favorite, is the one beginning *b'-hayeikhon...* and *l'-eila...* in the Musaf Kaddish for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur (Macy Nulman, *Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975: 224.

4 Josef Singer (1841-1911), Sulzer's assistant, succeeded him as Oberkantor; Isaac Schiller (1845-1918), became Singer's assistant.

5 Sulzer may have been alluding to the endemic rabbinic aversion for sharing a pulpit with any hazzan of repute.

Society, and published numerous articles in Hebrew, Yiddish and German. The two most enduring of his musical settings are for **Psalm 126—Shir ha-ma'a-lot b'-shuv adonai**—commonly misattributed to Yossele Rosenblatt (1882-1933) whose recording first popularized it, and Chaim Nachman Bialik's poem **Shabbat hamalkah**—“**Sabbath the Queen**” (Yehoshua Leib Ne'eman, “Pinchas Minkowsky,” *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 1972, 12: 35).

Shir hama'alot

Text: Psalm 126

Music: Pinchas Minkowsky
Arrangement: Joseph A. Levine

Cantor

Shir ha - ma - a - lot b' - shuv a - do - nai et shi - vat

High Voices

Low Voices

Shu - vah a - do - nai et sh'vi - tei - nu ka - a -

6

tsi - yon ha - yi - nu k' - hol - mim. Az - yi - ma - lei s' -

- fi - kim ba - ne - gev. Ha - zor - im, ha -

11

hok pi - nu ul' - sho - nei - nu ri -

zor - im b' - dim - ah, b'ri - nah, b' - ri - nah yik - tso -

16

nah. Az yom - ru va - go - yim, hig - dil a -

ru. Ha - lokh_ yei - leikh u - va - kho, no - sei

22

do - nai la - a - sot im ei - leh, hig - dil a - do - nai

me - shekh ha - za - ra, bo ya - vo,

27

la - a - sot i - ma - nu, ha - -

ya - vo v' - ri - nah, no - - -

30

-yi - nu s' - mei - - him.

- sei a - lu - mo - tav.

My Debut as a *M'shoreir*

By Boris Thomashefsky (1869-1939)

[Editor's Note:] All the great 20th-century hazzanim served as *m'shor'rim* (choristers) to other cantors as children. Being gifted with superior voices, they were routinely given choice solos to sing. The dynamics of a congregation dotting over any child soloist, especially among the womenfolk at High Holiday time, did not vary greatly from village to village in Eastern Europe. One possible justification for the sharing of remarkably similar memories of the experience by so many, was provided by Sigmund Freud.¹



It may indeed be questioned whether we have any memories at all *from* our childhood; memories *relating* to our childhood may be all that we possess. Our childhood memories show us our earliest years not as they were but as they appeared at the later periods when the memories were aroused. In these periods of arousal the childhood memories did not, as people are accustomed to say, *emerge*; they were *formed* at that time. And a number of motives, with no concern for historical accuracy, had a part in forming them, as well as the selection of the memories themselves.

Be that as it may, the famous—and vocally gifted—Yiddish actor Boris Thomashefsky once recalled what it was like to perform as a child soloist in the Great Synagogue of Kaminke, Ukraine.

* * * *

It's true that I'm no khazn. However, I feel so linked to the larger cantorial family that had not fate swept me up in the theatrical stream I might easily have entered the professional cantorate. I've often thought it might have been more fulfilling to stand at the amud and pray on behalf of all Israel than to portray all sorts of characters for them onstage. To prove it I'd like to describe a scene from my first childhood experience as a *meshoreir*.

When I was five years old my zeyde, Reb Yankel the Kaminker khazn, discovered in me a great voice. Not only my zeyde, may he rest in peace; my father, who was a musician and played fiddle, also said that I would grow

1 "Screen Memories," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Anna Freud, James Strachey & Angela Richards, eds. (London: Hogarth Press), 1953: 322.

into a great singer. The proof was my ability to imitate all the *m'shor'rim*. I rumbled like a bass, yelled like a tenor, brayed like an alto, and chirped like a soprano. I even imitated zeyde, who used to make trills and *staccati* in what was called a *falsetto*.

It was a foregone conclusion among the whole family and also among quite a few townfolk, including the gabbai of the shul that little Borukhl must sing the Adon Olam at the conclusion of the Kol Nidre service. Sure enough, the entire town waited upon my debut and I myself counted the days and begged God to hasten the arrival of Yom Kippur so that I might show all of Kaminke what I can do.

As luck would have it, shortly before Yom Kippur I caught cold. My throat swelled and the doctor pronounced my condition to be grave. I underwent a regimen of home remedies that included — among others — *teyglakh* (honey-soaked, baked dough balls) and *gogl-mogl* (hot milk, raw egg and honey), which were worse than the sickness. Worse still was the fear that I wouldn't be able to sing Adon Olam.

On the Eve of Yom Kippur, after feverish days of lying terrified in bed, my bubbe consoled me: "God is, after all, our Father in Heaven... He can still take pity ... By nightfall you'll be well enough to sing the Adon Olam." Finally, twilight arrived. Grandfather put on the white *kitl* (linen shroud) with its *gartl* (silken ritual belt) and *shtrayml* (broad-rimmed fur hat); father also. Mother and bubbe dressed up in their festive best.

I lay crying, wanting to go with them to shul but unable even to raise my head off the tear-stained pillow. They all blessed me, kissed me, and assured me they would pray on my behalf. Then they left me in care of the maidservant, an old Gentile lady.

Brokenhearted and aching all over, I crept to the window. With my burning forehead sticking to the cold glass I watched whole families walking, marching, almost running to undergo God's judgement and forgiveness. Children my age were carrying miniature *makhzorim*, jumping in festive glee, while I contended with my body-racking pains. I was too young to have merited such punishment from the *Ribono Shel Olam*—I hadn't yet had the chance to sin against Him. Why, then, was He preventing me from singing to Him?

Then all was quiet outside. The old maidservant lay down to sleep on the floor beside my bed and began snoring. I went to the door and opened it. The Great Synagogue was not far. I heard my zeyde's voice: Kol Nidre... and the *m'shor'rim* answered with the familiar *Skarbove* (traditional) responses. Among the voices I recognized my father's, and like a wounded kitten I slinked

back to bed and nursed the ever-intensifying stabbing sensation in my throat. Unable to bear it any longer I cried out, waking the maidservant who tried to comfort me. “May the Father, the Son & the Holy Mother speedily heal you,” she implored, while wrapping a hot compress around my throat. I lay back exhausted, feeling unlucky, unwanted, and fell asleep.

I dreamt that I was healthy, standing at the amud of the Great Synagogue next to zeyde and father, among the m’shor’rim, singing easily with such emotion, with such a Jewish *krekhits* (sob) that my treble rang like a finely-tuned instrument and every other boy in the shtetl envied me.

All at once, such a pain took hold of me that I thought a catastrophe had occurred. My throat felt as if it had torn apart. I wanted to scream, but could only bleat like a lamb. The maidservant heard me and ran over, frightened. She lifted my head and began to shout so loud that a few of the neighbors’ children who hadn’t gone to Kol Nidre came running. They, too, began to holler and cry; thinking that would “save” me.

When the maidservant had calmed me (and them) down, she gave me the good news that my fever had broken and that I’d soon be back in good health. It was true. I could breathe freely again and started playing with the neighbors’ children. The house rang with our high-pitched laughter. I forgot all about Kol Nidre and the infamous Adon Olam that I was supposed to be tossing off later that night.

The games ended when the old maidservant sent my playmates home out of concern that I might overexert myself and suffer a relapse. I was soon tucked in once more and she was back on the floor, snoring. Again I could hear my zeyde’s voice from the shul, and my father’s voice, the men’s wailing, the women’s weeping ...

Young as I was, I longed to be with zeyde, with father, chanting along with the Hebrew prayers, singing... I tried to sing the Adon Olam... very weakly... my throat sore... the voice cracking... impossible to hold a steady tone. The old maidservant didn’t stir—and a childish plan took shape in my mind. If she hadn’t awakened at my croaking, what was to prevent me from dressing in my holiday suit and stealing over to the shul?

That’s exactly what I did: washed, dressed, wrapped a white scarf around my neck and skipped out of the house like a young goat. I hardly felt the ground under my feet. My heart beat so rapidly that my head spun, my knees almost buckling from having laid in bed so long. But my happiness overrode any giddiness, and I pushed headlong into the crowd that overfilled the Kaminske synagogue.

I wormed my way to zeyde's side. He stood at the amud wrapped in a huge old-fashioned woolen tallit over his kitl. To steady myself I grabbed the *gartl* that encircled his waist. Zeyde shuddered, father held my other hand tightly. A stir went through the congregation.

The next thing I knew, I was lying face up behind the Holy Ark. The shul was quiet as a cemetery. The great wax candles burned furiously with a holy flame. The men in their white shrouds looked like heavenly angels. The sham-mash rapped three times for silence.

And what did my childish eyes behold? At the amud stood a small boy—my friend, actually—who, like me—assisted my zeyde in chanting the prayers. His name was Yisroelke, and he evidently was about to sing my Adon Olam. That realization hit me harder than any discomfort I had felt earlier. I would not let it happen!

In a flash I was up on my feet, springing like a feral cat up the few steps to the amud. I pulled Yisroelke off the amud, took his place and, without waiting for the *m'shor'rim* to give me a tone, I bellowed out Adon Olam.²

Zeyde kissed me. Father hugged me to his heart. Men lifted me aloft. The women would not leave me alone. My mother was the luckiest one in town, and the old folks kept saying they would remember my Adon Olam in the World to Come...

This Yiddish vignette is excerpted and translated from Tomashefsky's "Reminiscences of a Former Meshorer," Di geshikhte fun khazonus, ed. Aaron Rosen (New York: Khazonim Farband), 1924: 60-63.[JAL]

2 Abraham Baer's "Adon Olam for S'lihot" (*Baal t'fillah*, 1877: no. 241), published three years after Thomashefsky's debut as a *m'shorer*, probably approximates the mood of the one that young Borukhl sang to conclude the Kol Nidre Night service. This arrangement for cantor and choir is by Hugo Weisgal for his father Abba Yosef Weisgal's post-Holocaust book, *SHIREI HAYYIM VE-EMUNAH* (Baltimore: 1950, p. 6). The self-published collection was intended, in the composer's words, "as a partial replacement for all the Jewish spiritual values that were lost."

Adon olam for S'lihot

Text: Solomon Ibn Gabriol
11th Century Spain

Music: Abraham Baer, *Baal T'fillah*
1877, no. 241

Arrangement: Hugo Weisgal, in
Shirei Hayyim Veemunah
Adolph Weisgal, 1950

Misterioso

Cantor

1. A - don o-lam a - sher ma lakh_ b' - te - rem kol y' - tsir niv - ra,
 2. V' - a - ha-rei kikh - lot ha kol_ l' - va - do yim - lokh no - ra.
 3. V' - hu e-had v' - ein shei-ni_ l' - ham shil-lo l' - ha^h bi - rah,
 4. V' - hu ei - li v' - hai go'a-li_ l' - tsur hev - li b' - eit tsa - rah,
 5. B' - ya - do af - kid ru - hi_ b' - eit i - shan v' - a - i - rah,

Choir

(Hum)

Piano

Sustained *pp* under Cantor

6

1. L' - eit na - a' sah v' - hef tso_kol a - zai me - lekh sh' - mo nik - ra.
 2. v' - hu ha - yah v' - hu ho-veh v' - hu yi - h' - yeh b' - tif - a - rah.
 3. b' - li rei - shit b' - li takhlit v' - lo ha - oz v' - ha - mis - rah.
 4. v' hu ni - si u - ma nos - li m' - nat ko - si b' yom ek - ra.
 5. v' - im ru - hi g' - vi - ya - ti a - do - nai_ li v' - lo - i - ra.

mf

New Light for a New Century: Gershon Sirota (1874-1943)

Gleaned from many sources

In the year 1901 a so-called Century of Progress had just ended. From its certainty that the human condition would continue to improve came musical settings like *Sham'ah va-tismah tsiyon* (“Zion Will Hear and Rejoice”; Psalms 97:8-12)—composed by David Aizenstadt (1889-1942) in *Adonai malakh*, the prayer mode of optimism.

The poet Browning might have had this psalm in mind when he penned the line, “God’s in his heaven—all’s right with the world.”¹ *Sham'ah va-tismah tsiyon*² was popularized via phonograph recording in 1906 by Gershon Sirota, the great cantor of Warsaw, of whom the following accolade was written by critic Benedict Stambler:



Possessor of a remarkable *tenore robusto* voice, Sirota developed a wide reputation early in his career. His was considered by many to be the greatest synagogue voice of the 20th century. Non-Jewish critics regarded him as the only cantor who could be ranked with classical singers, often comparing him to Enrico Caruso. He began as a cantor in Odessa. At the turn of the century he moved from there to the Great Synagogue of Vilna. Eight years later he and his choir director, Leo Low (1878-1962) were called to the Tlomackie Synagogue of Warsaw where he officiated until 1926. During Sirota’s tenure there, services were religious musical events to which thousands flocked.³

Gershon Sirota, together with Barukh Schorr and Zavel Kwartin were among the first cantors to make recordings of synagogue prayers. Many who were in positions of leadership objected vociferously to the practice, the highly respected Hazzan Pinchos Minkowsky (1859-1924) among them. Professor Hayyim Chernowitz, known as *Rav Tsa’ir*, published an open letter to the officials (*gabbai’im*) of Tlomackie suggesting that they raise Cantor Sirota’s

1 Robert Browning, *Pippa Passes*, 1841, pt. 1, 1: 222.

2 *Edavid mizmor*, *Liturgical Compositions by David Aizenstadt*, ed. Israel Alter, Johannesburg, ca. 1950, pp. 6-10.

3 After B. H. Stambler, liner notes to *Sirota Sings Again*, Collectors Guild LP CG 591, 1959.

salary on condition that he not record.⁴ Hazzan Avraham Moshe Bernstein (1866-1932), whose compositions were among those featured by Sirota on his first contracted set of ten platters for Deutsche Gramofon, said: “If I were Rothschild I would buy up all the recordings of hazzanut in the world and burn them as a Jew burns *hamets* before Pesah.” In reaction to such criticism the Directors of Sirota’s synagogue took what was for them an unprecedented step. They forbade their hazzan from fulfilling any further recording engagements unless he first left his cantorial robe and cap in custody of the *shammash*.

That was the way the Tlomackie Synagogue smoothed over any ripples that appeared on the surface of its orderly cosmopolitan world. Its membership list included the wealthiest industrial magnates of Poland’s capitol, aristocrats who would never think of allowing themselves to be driven in their private carriages directly to the temple on Shabbat. Instead they told their drivers in advance to let them off a block away; they then walked up to the synagogue’s elaborately landscaped entrance, set back discreetly from the street, fronted by two large marble candelabras and flanked on either side by colonnaded porticoes built in the spacious 16th-century Palladian style.⁵

Amid those palatial surroundings a type of worship flourished that was known as *T’fillat ha-seider*—orderly worship. Polished and predictable, it offered a highly formal service in which even the cantor’s coloratura excursions were kept under strict control. That was essential if they were to dovetail with the meticulously prepared choral arrangements of Music Directors Leo Low (1878-1962) and later David Aizenstadt (1889-1942) who headed the superbly prepared male choir.

At its inception, twentieth-century hazzanut, epitomized by the services at Warsaw’s Tlomackie Synagogue and Odessa’s Brody Synagagogue under Music Director David Nowakowsky (1848-1921) and Hazzanim Nissi Blumenthal (1805-1903) and Pinchos Minkowsky (1859-1924)—represented the noble *khoshul* (“Choral Synagogue”) tradition. If one had to pick a scriptural verse that captured its upbeat mood from 1900 to 1914, it might well have been:

Or zaru’a la-tzaddik ul’-yishrei leiv simhah...

Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart.

Rejoice in Adonai, you righteous ones,

And acclaim the holiness of God,

4 Akiva Zimmermann, *B’ron yahad* (Tel-Aviv: Central Cantorial Archive), 1988: 100.

5 Samuel Vigoda, *Legendary Voices*, Vol. I (New York: self-published), 1981: 552-558.

as set to music by Ayzenstadt and recorded by Sirota.

Four decades later, in the Ghetto of Warsaw under Nazi occupation during World War II, Gershon Sirota would feel the urge to officiate at a Kol Nidre service for the last time, not having sung it for years. At the age of 69 he could no longer control his huge voice. It burst forth from the Tlomackie Synagogue Library's basement where he stood, and carried upstairs to the guards posted outside to warn against the approach of any German troops who would have disrupted the prayers and shot worshipers on sight.

As the Kol Nidre prayer progressed, Sirota's powerful tones seemed to awaken echoes of themselves during former services that he'd led many years before in the great sanctuary above, resonating from every subterranean corner, sweeping away pervasive thoughts of deportations, beatings, summary executions, torture and hunger. The *gabba'im* who had organized the service approached their cantor to ask that he modulate his volume downward, for the mighty sound threatened to bring Nazi retribution upon everyone present.

Sirota appeared befuddled. He could only divert the oral torrent inward. Those surrounding him saw the great cantor's terrible struggle as he fought to keep the still-gigantic voice boxed within his now gaunt and shrunken frame. His trembling became more and more visible as his body shook from head to toe, tears scalding his hollow cheeks. He was davening *inwardly* for a congregation—something he'd never before done in his fabled career.

Finally, he could no longer contain himself. *Miy-yom kippurim zeh ad yom kippurim ha-ba aleinu l'tovah* escaped his lips in an ear-splitting cry that ascended on high and seemed to take his soul with it. Sirota had collapsed at the makeshift *amud*. He was carried home by the *gabba'im*, his body still trembling from the emotional overload. He lay for weeks in that condition until he expired, his lips softly vibrating like the strings of a harp.⁶

6 Shimshon Mikhaeli, "Sirota's Final 'Kol Nidre,'" *Yedi'ot*, September 28, 1952.

Sham'ah va-tismah tsiyon

Text: Psalm 97: 6-12

Music: David Ayzenstadt
(1889-1942)

L'dovid mizmor,
collected & published by
Israel Alter, Johannesburg, n.d.

Andante Rubato ♩ = 72 ♩ = 84

1 Sham - ah ♩ = 96

mf *poco rit.* 3 3

5 va - tis-mah tsi - yon va - ta -

tr tr tr tr

8 geil - nah v'not y' - hu - dah l' ma - an mish - pa - te - kha, a - do -

5 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Sham'ah va-tismah tsiyon'. It is written in G major (one sharp) and common time. The score is divided into three systems. The first system starts at measure 1 and includes a tempo marking of 'Andante Rubato' and a metronome marking of ♩ = 72. The melody begins with a rest for two measures, then enters with a quarter note G4. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system starts at measure 5 and includes the tempo marking 'poco rit.'. The melody continues with the lyrics 'va - tis-mah tsi - yon va - ta -' and is accompanied by trills in both the upper and lower staves. The third system starts at measure 8 and includes the tempo marking 'Andante Rubato' and a metronome marking of ♩ = 84. The melody continues with the lyrics 'geil - nah v'not y' - hu - dah l' ma - an mish - pa - te - kha, a - do -' and features several triplet figures. The piano accompaniment includes a prominent triplet pattern in the right hand and a more active bass line.

11

- nai. Ki a-tah a-do nai_ el-yon al kol_ ha-a - retz, m'-

14

od na-a - lei - - ta al kol_e-lo - him.

17

O-ha - vei a -do- nai

19

sin - u ra, sin - u ra sho - meir naf -

22

shot ha - si - dav, naf - shot ha - si - dav miy - yad, miy -

24

yad, miy - yad r' sha - im, miy - yad r' - sha - im ya -

26

tsi - - - - leim, ya - tsi - leim.

28

30

Or za - ru - a la - tsa - dik u - l' - yish - rei leiv sim - hah,

32

sim - hu tsad - di - kim ba - do - nai, v' -

34

ho - - - du; v' -

37

ff ho - du, *pp* v' - ho - du l' -

39

ff zei - - - kher kod - sho.

My Life in Turn-of-the-Century Vienna & Its Environs

by Zavel Kwartin (1874-1952)

Salomon Sulzer's *Schir zion* is undoubtedly the best and richest source for a service at mid-20th century, as I write this looking back to 1897 Vienna. Even then we thought: of what value was Sulzer's approach without a choir? And with a choir there was still no one to listen to in either of the two great temples. Oberkantor Singer, who succeeded Sulzer at the Seitenstettengasse Tempel, did not distinguish himself vocally. When he sang in that bass-baritone of his it sounded as if a peasant were driving an un-greased wagon: every time the wheels squeaked, a shudder went through your heart. He was an intelligent and musical man, I fact he'd served as an officer in Emperor Franz Josef's army. But he was simply not familiar with the cantor's art. His assistant Schiller had a better voice that one could at least tolerate, but he, too, was nothing to get excited about. As a result, the word went around that "Singer can't sing and Schiller can't write poetry."



The crown prince among Viennese cantors at that time was Oberkantor Josef Goldstein who officiated at the Leopoldstadter Tempel. He was a little man with a huge voice. And as beautiful as his voice was, he couldn't warm the hearts of our eastern European Jews. In Sulzer's *Magein avot*, when the bass sang *l'fanav na'avod*, Goldstein would yell in unison with him an octave higher.

Week in, week out, you would hear the same settings by Sulzer, over and over again. The one cantor in Vienna worth hearing was Meyer Schorr of the Polnischer Tempel, whose son Friedrich sang at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. The father had a magnificent dramatic baritone and could move his listeners in either the traditional or the modern style.

Viennese Temple Choirs

At that time synagogue vocal ensembles were not on the highest level. It seemed as if the choir directors were not the least bit interested in choral singing. Their conducting style was erratic—almost pointless—and they were ignorant of the most rudimentary principles of singing. Their main livelihood was earned in other areas. The choral director at the Seitenstettengasse

Tempel was a matchmaker; his counterpart at the Leopoldstadter Tempel was a dance instructor. Both had access to the homes of the wealthy, Baron Gutman or Salo Kahn, whereas other, truly talented Jewish musicians without connections, went hungry while the temples were served by these second-raters. It was actually painful to hear the choral singing; not a hint of *piano*, *mezza di voce* or *parlando*. The choristers shouted like drunkards trying to drown each other out. And no one seemed to notice; the Viennese were what I would call cold, “top-hat” Jews.

I often wondered why Vienna was considered the Paradise of cantorial songs, when I recalled the choirs I had heard but a few months before in the Odessa synagogues—the Shalashne, the Yevreiske, and especially the Broder Choral Synagogue. In the last-named, every *m’shorer* was on constant alert for the most subtle nuances of rhythm and tone in order to prevent the tiniest impediment from marring the perfect execution of each composition. I shall never forget the rehearsals at the Broder Shul, conducted by the famous Nowakowsky. Pinye Minkowsky, the Chief Cantor, attended every one. And the total devotion that these two great musicians poured into each piece, the ecstasy and spirituality which they implanted within each chorister, was met by an equally intense effort on the part of the singers to satisfy every desire of their accomplished guides. It’s true that in Vienna I learned Sulzer’s compositions for the first time. But as for the *performance* of these compositions, Vienna was not the place to learn anything. Toward that end I had to remember the sonorities that Minkowsky and Nowakowsky achieved in the Broder Shul, where it seemed as if heavenly angels were singing on high to the Creator of this beautiful universe.

My Family’s Views of the Cantorate

Despite the fact that at a concert I had given in Lodz in 1897, the accompanist was an eight-year-old Artur Rubenstein, my father-in-law back home in Russia berated me with the following in a letter.

You have besmirched our good name. Until now, thank God, there have been only respectable businessmen. From where does a cantor come to our family—a beggar, a loafer? That my refined daughter should become a cantor’s wife, a beggar’s wife, whose pot every Jewess will consider it her right to inspect—that my son in law should chase weddings and circumcisions, funerals and unveilings, mumbling *t’hillim* and *hazkarot* and then having to stretch forth his hand in the hope that someone will take pity on him and donate a few kopeks—it’s unthinkable! And to top it all, you went to Vienna to study and learn how to become—a beggar?

That trade you could have learned in a place like Shnipishok, or perhaps even in your own backwater shtetl.

To show that blood is thicker than water, here is what my own father had to say on the subject.

He who says that to be a cantor is to descend to beggary, or lower, makes a little mistake. The cantor has been the public prayer emissary of his people for a thousand years of Jewish history, an advocate of our cause before the Almighty. Through his singing he expresses our sorrow and our joy, our hopes for a better future and our hopes for the rebuilding of Zion in our eternal Land. It is therefore shameful to utter even one negative word against the highest privilege that we as a folk can bestow—to plead for the health, happiness and sustenance of fellow Jews. I shall never forget the quickening of spirit I witnessed among Jews when my son officiated one weekend, the wonderful elevation of plain people driven all week under the yoke of earning a livelihood. When Shabbos arrived, the cantor—through his moving prayer—transported them to a different world. They became, in fact, different beings—finer, more exalted. Would you have me believe this is beggary?

Impressions of Galicia and of a Changed Cantorate

In those days cantorial candidates officiated gratis at audition Sabbaths. In lieu of a fee, Torah honorees pledged contributions for the guest khazn. On Sunday morning he and the *shammash* started going around to collect, which usually took the better part of a week, during which time the khazn had eaten up his profits. Another collection for him then had to be made in order for him to travel home.

The Lemberg Jews were ever-ready, without judge or judgement, to place a stranger under the Ban (*heirem*). The rabbis controlled Jewish life, and slander controlled the rabbis. Among Galician Jews the main topic of conversation was: whose Wonder rabbi is the best, the wisest and the greatest miracle worker.

Small-town cantorial wages in Galicia were only 600 kronen a year. An itinerant khazn could count on 10-12 kronen from post-Shabbos collections, 18 kronen for concerts, and 50 kronen for the entire Passover. One Pesah I asked for 200 kronen and got it. In my long practice as a cantor I never stopped thinking, studying or immersing myself ever deeper into the inexhaustible well of Jewish song. I sought to surround myself with each word of the liturgy, the better to interpret them for my listeners. At the prayer Amud, my entire being burned with a flame that the congregation knew how to fan.

Now, as I write these thoughts down a half-century after the fact, I'd have to say that the Golden Age of hazzanut is over; new times bring new songs. Today's cantor is less a messenger than a mechanic. He has become a sacrificial offering on the altar of the modern rabbi. The cantor allowed himself to be demoted from the treasured place he held in Jewish hearts—and it's a tremendous loss. Looking back at myself in the Vienna of 1903 I'd have to admit that I was a country bumpkin next to the elegantly turned-out, German-speaking, Van-Dyke bearded Viennese. The president of my shul in Vienna—Wilhelm Beck of Beck & Son, Clothier by Appointment to the Emperor—said about strangers: "We want no Russians, no foreigners; we want only Austrians!"

Still, as rough-around-the-edges as I might have been at the time, I can only say of my competitors for the cantorial post at the newly-built 150-seat Fareinstempel in Josefstadt: it's a shame that these were called "cantors." They had no hint of the traditional chant or even of acceptable vocal quality. Yet there was no viable alternative when it came to making a living in Vienna. The saying went: "Better a theatre chorister than a synagogue *m'shorer*." Four days before Shavuot I was hired. The fee was 100 kronen, no choir. So I prepared a middle way—not too Orthodox and not too choral—that would be acceptable to an upper-class congregant. It worked. My first yearly wages were well within the average of 1600-2400 kronen.

The New Josefstadt Temple

Salomon Sulzer's son Joseph was a cello virtuoso who occupied first chair in the Vienna Imperial Opera Orchestra. Two years later he would re-arrange and re-publish his father's *Schir zion*, but in 1903 he was engaged to prepare and direct the Dedication ceremony of the New Josefstadttempel, scheduled for two weeks before Rosh Hashanah. The baritone Edelman was engaged as cantor and director of his own mixed choir for a year-plus, beginning immediately and extending through *Yamim nora'im* of the following year. Had they been able to start at the New Temple for the impending *yom tov* of Shavuot as their contract stipulated, my lot would have been far different. Instead, they canceled at the last minute, and I stepped in, where beforehand I could not even beg an audition. Following a successful Shavuot I was engaged as Oberkantor, and Edelman was consigned to the position of *Hazzan sheini*.

With the Emperor's approval, the new building was named after the late Empress: Kaiserin Elizabet Tempel, and the rejoicing among the congregational officials was such that one might imagine a great deliverance had come to the Jews! From that day on, no expense was spared to make the Dedication

a memorable event. Joseph Sulzer engaged the best mixed voices in the city; the result was an organ-sound. A representative of the Emperor was expected along with the Bürgermeister and other Viennese dignitaries.

Special rehearsals for the Dedication lasted three hours during the day, while nighttime sessions were devoted to High Holiday repertoire with the Temple choir. These were in addition to my private lessons in music theory with Professor Steinschneider. The months between Shavuot and *Yamim nora'im* were the hardest in my life; everything depended on the Dedication ceremony and the High Holiday services. The following selections are what appeared on the Dedication program:

<i>Mah tovu</i> (Processional)	Sulzer
<i>Ha-notein t'shu'ah</i>	(Sulzer; in German)
<i>Mizmor shir Hanukkat</i>	(Sulzer; in German)
<i>Pit'hu Li</i> (Torah scrolls brought in)	(Sulzer)
<i>Halleluyah</i>	(Sulzer)
<i>Adon olam in C</i>	(Sulzer)
<i>Gott Erhalt, Gott Beschütz</i> (Austrian Hymn)	

I was accompanied by a 30-voice operatic choir, plus organ and harp. Joseph Sulzer went over every solo note with me, and Professor Steinschneider coached every musical and linguistic nuance. The result was an exquisite harmony between cantor, choir and instruments. Afterwards, Joseph Sulzer said to me: “When my father (of blessed memory) lived, he was surely never privileged to hear his own compositions performed so masterfully.” The Dedication was an event, even in Vienna; my local popularity began from that day on.

I was not quite thirty years old. My new temple held 1,000 seats; because of the crowds who came to hear Rabbi Dr. Bauer and me conduct services, they squeezed in 1,500 regularly. A new spirit—which brought with it new resources—transformed the congregation. I insisted on the insertion of a clause in my contract: if everything went well in the new building I had the right to renegotiate (the expected request was 1,500 kronen plus 300 kronen to bring my family from Russia). When the time was ripe I asked for double the 1,500 in order to live a *bekovedeh* (dignified) existence.

Weeks went by and President Beck gave me no answer. During the interim a position had opened in Bucharest, Roumania, paying the equivalent of 4,000

kronen plus a six-room congregational apartment. Finally, when my pekle saw how obstinate I was, they offered a five-year contract of 2,000, 2,200, 2400, 2600, 2800. Since Bucharest had beckoned in the meantime, I held out for 3,000 immediately. My father had advised me to avoid Roumania, which he called a “Land of Amalekites.” That convinced me to remain in Vienna, but I needed to have my family join me, and that would be costly. I finally agreed to 2,500, 2,600, 2,700, 2,800, 3,000. Among other things, that meant I didn’t have to leave my two closest friends: Smotritsky, who was second cantor at the Leopoldstadt Temple, and Edelman—my own second cantor—and his well-trained choir.

While negotiations were still in progress I had been pressured by the Bucharest congregation until I agreed to audition there (“give *probeh*”—a tryout—in the vernacular), for which they paid 200 kronen and offered me twice what it turned out I would be earning in Vienna. I resisted temptation and stuck to the new agreement.

My Vienna Routine and Colleagues

I added German lessons to my schedule and still found myself with too much time. The father-in-law of my assistant choir director. Nyeshvezky, dealt in decorative wood fabricated in Aleksander, near his home town, Warsaw. This Mzhivovsky talked me into becoming a wood supplier to Viennese furniture manufacturers, duped me into paying in advance for fifteen wagonloads of lumber, and delivered inferior merchandise. Bottom line: what I had earned in 1903 I lost in 1904. Also, my brother Boris was conscripted during the Russo-Japanese War, and actually tried to organize the army against the Czar! He was arrested and scheduled for court-martial, but managed to escape. I then got him to Vienna where the police hounded him as an anarchist. We finally sent him to Switzerland, with monthly stipends following regularly. There, his wife took ill, but accepted no medicine. She was what we might call a “Jewish Scientist.” She sat with siddur in hand and read *Tzenah ur’edah* (Yiddish prayers for women) all day, claiming “Everything is the will of the Creator.”

If that weren’t enough, his older son was run over and required six months of recuperation, therapy and constant attention. I was fast becoming the relative-of-last-resort, to meet, greet, fete and sustain all fleeing Russian members of the *mishpokhe*. My home became a hotel and all family obligations fell on my shoulders. Expenses mounted, bills went unpaid. One day I read an announcement in *The Cantors’ Journal* about a vacancy for Oberkantor in Warsaw’s Tlomackie Street Synagogue—Viennese cantors were invited

to apply. I wrote, saying that if they paid my 200 kronen travel expenses, I'd daven a Shabbos. They eventually agreed to 150 kronen and told me to pick a date. I did: January 1, 1906.

The Oberkantor at Tlomackie was Grizhandler, very old at the time, and the choirmaster was Smerling. The choir was in the process of being unionized, and half its members had been locked out by the synagogue. The other half belonged to the Bund (Jewish Socialist Party). The Bund bombed the Jewish cemetery that Friday; no bed of roses had I fallen into. I davened and could have had the job, but received a telegram from my wife and father, stating—in no uncertain terms—to return home without delay!

Colleagues and Early Recordings

First among the cantors to record were Czerini (Breslau) and Sirota (Vilna), both for Deutsche Gramofon in 1906. Other recording companies were Edison, Pathé Disc, Odeon and Deutsche Victor. I wrote to all four of them; only Pathé answered. For my unaccompanied audition I sang an undistinguished *V'shamru*. It proved distinguished enough for them to contract for five pieces, three minutes each, with piano, for 100 kronen, all of which was spent on re-takes since I hadn't yet learned to time accurately. I broke even, and the platters came out a week later.

I then turned the tables and auditioned the technical reproduction of these samples against those of other companies, including His Master's Voice—Victor in the USA.

Deutsche Gramofon Gesellschaft (DDG) was superior, but they paid only thirty kronen per number and recording was at the artist's expense (versus 40 kronen plus free recording at the others). I decided to stay with DDG, and recorded the required minimum of platters—ten—and they made quite an impression.

The Director, Mikhelis, came from Berlin to engage me for a five-year contract at 3,000 per year, 20 records every year. I stalled; Mikhels told me: "If you don't agree by tomorrow, we'll engage Sirota" (who had already succeeded Grinzhandler in Warsaw but was staying temporarily in Vienna). Something smelled rotten to me. I later discovered that they had offered the same deal—and warning—to Cantors Sonntag of Bucharest and Goldenberg of Marienbad. That night, Sirota himself—who happened to be in Vienna—came to my home and told me that he'd been offered 200 rubles per recording, but wanted 500. I panicked, and signed, the next day, with DGG—who agreed to pay for an accompanist—but felt duped nonetheless.

Other well-known Vienna cantors in 1906 were: Gutman, Matiash, Dinneman, Basser, Smotritsky and Josef Grob, who was my new assistant. Sirota, by then established in Warsaw, stayed at the Hotel Continental, where eighteen khazonim greeted him, about all the cantors there were in the city. He'd come at the suggestion of the Tlomackie Synagogue's Board to study music in the Austrian capitol while the Bund strike paralyzed his choir; if Sirota dared officiate without the choir, worshippers threatened to disrupt the service.

The following ten prayers—the first six of which I improvised in the Old style—were my first DGG recordings (for the transcription of a later recorded “improvisation in the Old Style,” see music at the end of this article ¹):

Kol adonai

Ahavat olam

V'ha'ofanim

Y'kum purkan

Mi she-beirakh

Al heit

N'kadeish (Nigzvyezshky)

Mah gadlu (Lewandowsky)

B'leil zeh (Sulzer—with choir)

V'Shamru (Dunayevsky)

The recordings sold out so quickly that DGG asked for ten more improvisations in the Old Style, which I supplied, with Professor Braslavsky at the organ, in a single afternoon. For this they paid 1,500 kronen—half a year's contract. I had completed the first year's obligation of twenty platters in two months and in June of 1906 I embarked on a concert tour of Russian *shtetlekh* (plural of *shtetl*), where I again heard snatches of the nusah I had imbibed during my childhood.

More Recording-and-Other Adventures

After that re-dipping in the well of Eastern European inspiration, I actually davened better! In January of 1907 the Temple allowed me a second “vacation”

1 Kwartin's music for *Leil shimmurim* (“Divinely Guarded Night,” *Semiroth Zebulon*, New York, 1938), a piyyut inserted into the Ma'ariv service for Pesah, is set here to a similar but more widely known text for Festival evenings: *Ki eil shom'reinu* (“For You Are Our Divine Guardian”).

in which to tour that region. In four weeks I gave eight concerts in Vilna and Bialystok. During my stay in Vilna the Isserlin Brothers, who held the DDG distributorship for Poland, Lithuania and Kurland, told me they had sold half-a-million of my records in the previous five months, more than all the records they'd sold in the previous five years! Supply couldn't keep up with the pace of demand. On the train back home I thought of the time when I wouldn't be able to sing—who would then worry about my income? But the DDG would still be raking in shekels from the recordings I'd made during the five best prime years of my vocal life.

I sounded out other gramophone companies. Pathé offered three years at 10,000 kronen a year for 20 recordings per year. Odeon offered three years at 15,000 kronen a year for 30 recordings per year. Both of these were “exclusive” offers, the same as my understanding with DGG, which meant my commitment not to record for other companies for the duration of the agreement. For advice I approached my Temple's President, Herr Beck, who recommended Dr. Green, a bright young lawyer. He found in the Austrian Codex a point of law similar to the Talmudic *mekah ta'ut* (an agreement made under a false premise)—where fair value of up to 50% of the real worth is not received for a contract.

I confronted DGG: “I won't sing for DGG as long as they won't pay me what I'm worth.” The celebrated Vienna State Opera tenor Leo Slezak, also under exclusive contract to DGG, enjoyed fame second only to that of Enrico Caruso. He too felt cheated by DGG and, in anger, recorded for Odeon. DGG had sued him for a quarter-million and was awarded 92,000 kronen plus costs. But I had not recorded elsewhere; time was on my side, as DGG needed me now! They offered 4,500; I demanded 15,000. They offered 6,000; I demanded 15,000—but in the first year, for which I'd already been paid 3,000, I would accept 12,000. We settled at 12,000 for each of the five years, with a few additional points included in the new contract. I would make up to forty recordings a year with any extra ones paid *pro rata* and no refusals permitted. This was in the Autumn of 1906, the most productive period of my life. Money rolled in along with fame and adulation. I was able to help the entire family: one brother who was cantor in Stanislav, Galicia, and a second brother who had just graduated from the Vienna Conservatory as a music teacher. That brother's wife's condition had worsened and she sank into a state of melancholy.

Meanwhile, Baron David Guinsberg of St. Petersburg offered me two and-a-half times what I was earning in Vienna—equivalent to 6,000 rubles—plus outside income of at least 800 Rubles a year. I hated the thought of leaving

Vienna, a civilized society where I'd never had to worry about being called "Zhid" (the Russian pejorative for "Jew"). I agreed to do a concert for 1,000 rubles. Why? My Russian-born family was captivated by consideration of the *yikhus* (status) that accrued to living in St. Petersburg, normally off-limits to Jews. I, on the other hand, was wary of the bleak Jewish existence that I had witnessed while travelling through Russia to concertize in various *shtetlekh*.

My January 1908 tour—by then it had become an annual event—began in Vilna. The concert there was accompanied by a choir under the direction of Josef Gotbeter, and included:

K'dushah by Gotbeter,
Adon olam by Sulzer,
Cantorial Improvisations,
Operatic Arias and
German Lieder.

The Chief Cantor in St. Petersburg's Choral Synagogue was Ressel, and Gurevich directed the 25-voice choir. My program there consisted of:

Mah gadlu by Lewandowsky,
V'shamru by Gurevich,
B'rosh hashanah by Sulzer and
Adon olam by Sulzer.

Another St. Petersburg concert, in the city's largest hall, Dovryansker Sovrane, was attended by all the assimilated Russo-Jewish elite. It was one of the four most successful concerts of my career. I thought to myself: here the children would enjoy special entrée to gymnasia and universities. So I demanded a ten-year contract with three years guaranteed if terminated early by the congregation. I would be free to leave at anytime simply by giving one year's notice. They said: "fine"; and I left.

Back home, I told my own synagogue officers about my worries for the future, mainly over the lack of a pension. I told them about the chance I suddenly had to better myself while still in possession of my full powers. I asked if they would therefore get me recognized officially by the Kultusgemeinde (organized Jewish community) so that at the next opening I could be appointed Oberkantor for life. To that, the synagogue's vice-president Dr. Gustave Kahn replied: "No!"

Apparently, there were no exceptions to the established seniority system in Vienna. Instead, my people offered to buy a 30,000 kronen life insurance

policy for my family. I begged off at this magnanimous gesture. My ailing wife said to me: “Wherever God leads you, I will go.” This quote from the Book of Ruth wasn’t of much help. I had no one to confide in. My eldest child Anna, all of eight years, said: “Take Petersburg. In Russia we have two *zeydes* and two *bubbes* and lots of uncles and aunts! Maybe Momma will feel better among her own.” That did it, and off I went, alone.

To Russia and Back

Just as I arrived in Russia, Czar Nicholas II called a conference of 32 rabbinical authorities in St. Petersburg, and at the same time he lowered the Jewish education quota from ten percent to three percent. When they learned of the decree, 136 promising Jewish youngsters took their own life. St. Petersburg turned out to be a prison: brutal and Jew baiting. Half my congregation each week consisted of Gentiles and converts. In June 1909, after eight months of this, I “visited” Vienna on the pretext of intending to bring my family back to Russia with me, but secretly vowing never to settle there permanently.

Budapest’s Tabak Temple next approached me (in those years, Vienna and Budapest were sister cities within the Austro-Hungarian Empire). Back in 1906 I’d been invited to succeed Jacob Bachmann as cantor at Budapest’s ultra-Orthodox Rombach Temple. I hadn’t accepted because of a refugee cantor—my competition—who needed the job more than I did. Also, I had gotten used to facing the congregation and having a mixed choir and organ. At Rombach I would have had to forget all that and wear a heavy woolen *tallis* over my head again! In addition, I would have had to run from the central Bimah to the prayer Amud up front and recite every *Yotseir* and *K’rovah* (series of piyyutim inserted in Shaḥarit and Musaf). But the more modern Tabak Temple would be different. I’d made inquiries at the Tabak back in 1906 and had been told: “Don’t worry, when the position is open we’ll call you.”

Now, three years later, I had three offers: St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Budapest. So I asked the Tabak Tempel for 15,000 ronen a year, and was informed that only Oberabbiner Dr. Kohn received that. My reply: “I’ve no objection if you pay Dr. Kohn 30,000 a year!” They offered me 12,000. By the time I returned to Vienna, word of the negotiations had apparently preceded me; my temple was ready to go the limit to get me back.

A Tale of Negotiations in Two Cities

Vienna had 20 Kultusgemeinde temples, whereas Budapest had only 15. Under the Kultusgemeinde system of seniority there hadn’t been a real Oberkan-

tor—on the communal level—in Budapest for decades. With the exception of Bela Gutman, the best cantors served in privately-run synagogues. The Vienna Kultusgemeinde offered me 8,000 with a 1,000 kronen raise every five years, plus side income. I countered with 12,000 and the six years I'd served Kaiserin Elizabetempel counting toward my pension. They could not (or would not) meet this. Budapest agreed to the 12,000 plus a 1,500 kronen bonus for signing, 800 kronen for the children's education and 700 kronen for vacation. My contract would also include the following clause.

This agreement is effective upon receipt of character-reference document from Oberkantor Kwartin's native state in Russia (Tchestne Povedenye), to be sent to the Budapest Chief Rabbinate for approval.

I insisted they forget that clause, and waited to hear. That High Holidays I davened in St. Petersburg, and since I hadn't brought my family as previously agreed, the existing contract became null and void. Baron Guinzburg was heartsick with disappointment over this.

Back in Budapest the Kultusgemeinde had to ask the Austro-Hungarian government for an additional 100,000 kronen to pay off all their communal religious functionaries who, having learned of the tremendous compensation I was to receive, were now demanding raises as well. Eventually the Tabak Board agreed that I was "not under Rabbinical Supervision," but rather the master of my own fate and a worthy public servant in the full sense of the term. On a final visit to my boyhood home in Novoarkangels, Ukraine, I imbibed deeply at the source of Jewish prayer—enough to counterbalance all the years I'd spent and was going to spend in Germanified countries.

Last stop in Pre-War Europe: Budapest

I came to the Hungarian capitol in December 1910. No announcement was made of my arrival and as a result, no one came to shul. The Tabak Tempel seated over 4,000 people, and for the minyan of regulars I refused to daven. They placed an ad for the second week but it still didn't help—Jews won't buy a pig in a poke!

The Tabak Tempel Rabbinical staff laid down the law: "Ritual policy is for the cantor only to begin and end, not to sing entire paragraphs and convert the temple into a Hasidic *kloyz*!" They, together with the Cantorial staff of Lazarus and Licht, mocked me on the Bimah the following Shabbos. It took six weeks before Jews on the street—*peyes* and all—began to pack the Temple, especially on Friday night. The rabbis called a meeting to complain officially about the "Russian's" lack of cultural awareness and how he'd insulted the

rabbis. I told the Board of Directors: “You brought me here to fill the temple with worshipers; in eight short weeks I’ve accomplished that.” I then offered to resign, but they wouldn’t hear of it. In fact, President Adler insisted that the rabbis shake my hand, then and there, in token of support and friendship. They did, knowing that I had dealt them a permanent blow.

The Tabak Tempel was one of the best cantorial positions in Europe, and not even my wife’s illness could spoil it for me. On my first *Yamim nora'im* they had to rent additional space—the Parliament Building with its 1,500 seats—for an overflow service. I alternated with my assistant, Lazarus, and together we initiated a re-energizing of semi-assimilated Budapest: old and new would now meet through ritual.

As an investment I bought a six-story apartment building containing 12 units, for 280,000 Kronen, with a down payment of 80,000. In it, the Kwartin family unit consisted of five rooms. My yearly net, after expenses, was 4,000 kronen from rent. Were it not for the War to End All Wars, I might have become the richest cantor in history.

Next to the murder of six million by the Nazis a quarter-century later, the uprooting of the entire Jewish population of Lithuania and Poland during the First World War seems like child’s play. But at the time—before the advent of gas chambers and ovens—the destruction of Eastern European Jewish civilization was a catastrophe theretofore unequalled. Ironically, during the First World War the German High Command worried over the welfare of Jewish communities. They actually sponsored me in holding cantorial concerts to raise money for Passover Matzos! It was the idea of Choirmaster/Organist Leo Low; he had done similar tours with Cantors Sirota and Hershman previously.

Soldiers of the defeated Austro-Hungarian army returning from the front were no longer the same men. They would come home as wild beasts not knowing on whom to take out their anger. They mourned their broken lives, their wasted youth, their continuing nightmares, their thwarted careers. In the early Spring of 1920 I, too, said “dayeinu” to the Old World and—trusting that God will always be *shomreinu u-matsileinu* (“our guardian and deliverer”)—set sail for America.

*This article is excerpted and translated from Cantor Zvulun (Zavel) Kwartin’s autobiography, **Mayn lebn** (Philadelphia: S. Kamerling), 1952: 140-394. [JAL]*

Ki eil shom'reinu

After Zavel Kwartin's
Leil Shimmurim

Piano: Charles Heller

1

freely

3 6 3

Deliberately

Ki eil sho-m'-rei - nu sho - m'-rei-nu u - ma-tsi - lei

Ped. (*ad lib.*) Ped. 8^{vb}*

(8) ...

7

nu u - ma-tsi-lei - nu a - tah. Ki eil me - lekh,

10

me-lekh han-nun v' ra

12

hum, v'-ra - hum a - tah.

15

u'-sh'-mor tsei tei - nu u - vo - ei - -

16

nu

17

l' - hay - yim, l' hay - yim u - l' - sha - lom,

20

mei' a - tah v' - ad o - lam, v'

24

ad o - lam, v' - ad o - lam, v' - ad o - lam, v' - ad o - lam.

27

Ba - rukh a - tah, a - do - nai ha - po - reis,

30

ha-po - ries suk -

31

ha-po - ries suk -

33

- kat, ha-po- reis suk - kat, suk-kat sha - lom, a-lei - nu,

36

a-lei - nu, a - lei-nu, a-lei-nu v'-al kol a-mo yis-

39

ra - - eil, a - lei - nu v' -

41

al kol a - mo yis-ra-eil v' -

43

al, v' - al y' - ru-sha - la - - yim.

The World of Yossele Rosenblatt (1882-1933)

By Joseph A. Levine

On June nineteenth, nineteen hundred and thirty-three. Yossele Rosenblatt, the most beloved cantor of the twentieth century, finally achieved his life's ambition and died on the sacred soil of *Erets yisrael*. His name was really Josef, but it never appeared that way except in newspapers and on record labels, and of course on his gravestone in Jerusalem. He was buried on the Mount of Olives cemetery, opposite *Sha'ar ha-rahamim*, the Mercy Gate through which it is said that our final redemption will come. The Chief Rabbi of Palestine at that time, Abraham Isaac Kook began his eulogy ...



Yosefeinenu. Joseph is no more. With these words father Jacob mourned the death of his favorite son, the one most like himself. Had Jacob not fought with God and man and prevailed, earning the name Yisrael? And had not Joseph the Dreamer of Dothan fought and won spiritual battles; and had not Joseph the Viceroy of Egypt waged a victorious war of survival? So, too, *our* Joseph—*he-hazzan yosef ben r'foeil v'khaye-soroh*—embodied the qualities that best describe any child of Israel: religiosity directed towards improving the world. For this world—which he has departed—consists of opposites, at times of light and at times of darkness. At this moment we stand in gloom. Like Job, “our harp is turned to mourning, and our flute into bitter tears.” Would to God that it were again but two days ago, when the light of Khazn Rosenblatt's prayer shone upon us in the *Hurvah* Synagogue of the Old City. Angels must have helped him achieve the otherworldly davening that we all marveled over, just as they are surely helping him now, when the song of his life has suddenly been silenced ...

He had wanted to be buried high on the Mount of Olives not just because of its view, but because of the Prophet Ezekiel. Yossele said, “When the Messiah appears at that summit, Ezekiel will sound his Priestly trumpet that hasn't been heard since the fall of King Solomon's Temple, and the dead will come alive.” Yossele could be very practical when he wanted. He had figured out that it would be an easier climb later on if he were buried near the top to begin with. His loving wife Taube, on the other hand, felt that *Mashi'ah's* arrival was too far in the future to worry about reserving a ringside seat in the present. She may have been mistaken. Rabbi Kook had more to say on the subject a bit later on in his eulogy. For now, a better question might be: how did the Rosenblatts happen to be in Jerusalem while living in New York?

Travel costs money and, to be honest, they weren't wealthy people. After the failure of Yossele's only business venture, almost every dollar he'd earned over the last seven years of his life went to creditors.

At this point, dear Reader, you might be thinking that our story would do better to start where it *began*, instead of where it ended. So with your kind permission, let's go back to when Yossele first started singing as a boy-khazn. The year was eighteen hundred and ninety-one. He was nine years old. His father R'foeil and mother Khaye-Soroh had produced nine girls before Yossele was born. On a cold, grey December morning in the Austro-Hungarian portion of Poland known as Galicia, R'foeil had hitched horse to wagon and was waiting impatiently for Khaye-Soroh to finish bundling up their boy. He called: "Nu, Yosl, are you coming already?"

From inside the house came a bell-like reply, "Yes, Poppa."

R'foeil shouted back, "Shabbos won't wait, and we've got a healthy journey to Komarno.

Khaye-Soroh, what is holding up our golden-voiced treasure?" Then he began to quote from Pirkei Avot: "The day is short. The task is great, the workers are lazy, and the time is..."

"...*Brief*," interjected Khaye-Soroh. "R'foeil, *sha!* Enough already. You know how frail the child is. If he travels without dressing warmly, it will be on your head. God forbid that he catches cold and cannot sing for the Komarno Rebbe this afternoon before the *Kabbalat shabbat* service..."

All right, all right," protested R'foeil, "only how long does it take to tie a scarf around a neck that's as skinny as a chicken's?" he called again, "Yosl, are you coming?" Only this time the answer came from right next to him on the buckboard.

"I'm right here, Poppa, what are we waiting for?"

R'foeil sighed to himself, "for *this* I had to bring a prodigy into the world after nine trouble-free daughters!" He gave a quick tug on the reins and clicked his teeth: "*Vyo, ferdele...*" (giddyup!).

After a while, Yosl the prodigy volunteered, "Poppa, I've memorized every Mishnah you taught me in *Seder n'zikin*, the laws of damages; which would you like to hear: "An ox that gored a cow"?"

"*No!*" shot back his father, "we've heard enough about damaged oxen, cows, bulls and sheep these past few days to start a farm. The way things have been going lately, better I should listen to the laws of bankruptcy. How about

chapter nine, my boy, the eighth Mishnah, *Heikhon pikdoni*: “One man said, ‘Where is my deposit...’”

As if in proof of the sages’ statement that after the Holy Temple’s destruction the gift of prophecy was given to minors, Yosl blurted out: “and the other said, ‘It is lost.’”

“Well,” prompted R’foeil, “what *if* the money is lost?”

“The first man makes him swear to it,” answers Yosl in a Talmudic singsong. “And the other swears as well. And if witnesses testify that the first man actually *spent* the money, then he must pay the value alone. But if he himself confessed it, he must pay the value plus an additional twenty percent.”

“And what if the money were really *lost*?” challenged R’foeil.

“It goes without saying,” rejoined Yosl in his bright alto, “that he is free from liability!”

R’foeil seemed totally absorbed by his offspring’s rejoinder, when suddenly he groaned: “Oy, It should only be *so!*”

“What should be so, Poppa?”

“That a man, brought to court over money issues, should be considered innocent! Such freedom from liability only works for scholars who sit and study all day while their wives go out and support them. For those of us who have to earn a livelihood it’s still easier to *make* money than to keep it. Speaking of making money, Yosl, reminds me. Tomorrow night after *Havdalah*, they will not be taking up the usual collection for your daven’n over Shabbos. We’re coming to the Rebbe for his *approval* of your officiating in public until you are Bar Mitzvah. We are performing gratis this weekend.

They arrived at the Rebbe’s Court, unhitched the horse and settled him in a stable, leaving their belongings in the room reserved for visiting cantors, and set off for their interview with the Rebbe of Komarno. That imposing personality looked down at the diminutive supplicant.

“My dear Yosl, I understand that you would be a singer in Israel. So sing something for us now in honor of the *yom tov*—since it is not only *erev shabbat*, but also *erev hanukkah*.”

“Rebbe,” said Yosl, “the candles are lit and we have already sung the first verse of *Mo’oz tsur y’shuosi*. If it’s all right with you, I’d like to recite the final verse—*Y’vonim nikb’tsu olai...*”

When Maccabeus broke the Greek chain asunder,
Through a miracle, You did show a wonder;

The single flask of oil remained unprofaned—

For eight days, lights and praise to You was ordained.

For what seemed an eternity the Rebbe was silent. Then, as though speaking to himself, he uttered the fateful verdict: **“His mouth is pure, his prayers will be heard.”**

The Komarno Rebbe’s seal of approval echoed through every *shtetl* in Galitzia, where purity really counted. Yosl’s childhood had ended—as would his adulthood—before its time; he became an instant celebrity. On his travels he came to Briegl, a town near Cracow that was, as he would later describe it, no bigger than the yawn of a flea! What set it apart was that Taube—his future wife whose father, Reb Idl Kaufman, served as town *shokhet*—lived in Briegl. Yosl had davened there when he and Taube were both twelve years old. For him it was just another among endless Sabbaths which he spent on the road, officiating for a few gulden. But that *first* one became the Sabbath of Sabbaths in their minds.

Six years later Taube stood at the same spot from where she had first heard him, upstairs in the women’s gallery. They were now eighteen and about to be married in the synagogue courtyard. She tried to recapture the quiet intensity of that earlier occasion, but her three bridesmaids remembered it differently.

“Listen to her,” one of them said, “we thought you would jump off the balcony when he began to sing.”

The second bridesmaid joined in. “You acted as if you had never heard a khazn before.”

“Never a *boy* khazn,” Taube protested.

“And never one so small,” added the third bridesmaid; “remember how you ran after him when the service ended?”

Then all three chorused, “and remember how *we* ran after *you*, singing ‘Taubele loves the khazndl, Taubele loves the khazndl...?’”

Taube finally admitted defeat. “Can’t a person change their mind? I’ve since learned that size is not what counts, but what’s *inside* the package. When he ate Shabbat dinner our house and our eyes met—I *knew* it was meant to be.”

Seemingly before the newlyweds turned around it was nineteen hundred and eleven. More than a decade had passed and they were the parents of six children, two for each of the cities where Yossele had served as cantor: Munkacz, Presburg, and Hamburg. They were to relocate one more time, and of course, two more children would follow.

With every child it became more difficult to make ends meet. R'foeil and Khaye-Soroh had grown old and their nine daughters each required a dowry before they could be married off. Since Yossele was the only breadwinner, he assumed the responsibility of providing for every newly formed family as well. When one of his sisters became widowed, Yossele and Taube took her in to live with them, together with her little girl. The Rosenblatts never turned anyone away empty handed. *Shabbos* and *yom tov* after services they always had a tableful of poor refugees from Russia, Poland and Rumania. In fact, their home became a haven for the Easterners. Like Yossele, the refugees who had gravitated to Hamburg found the Jews in that port city to be as cold as their certified Kosher ice cream. Its label ironically read: "Frozen under the Chief Rabbi's supervision."

Yossele was busy seven days a week with his cantorial duties, so the entire burden of running their household fell upon Taube. As the daughter of a *Shokhet* she had grown up with animals. She lulled her children to sleep with tales of birds, calves, goats and sheep hovering about their beds. It must have worked, for they all grew up strong, healthy and normal. How do we know they were normal, you ask? Simple; none of them became a cantor!

The whole family moved to America in nineteen hundred and twelve when Yossele accepted a yearly position with New York City's First Hungarian Congregation Oheb Tzedek. A year earlier, Oheb Tzedek had sent delegates to a World Zionist Convention in Hamburg, where they attended services at Yossele's synagogue. The delegation invited him to come alone to New York—on consignment, as it were—and now they officially engaged him at twenty-four hundred dollars a year for five years, one of the the highest salaries ever paid an American Orthodox cantor until then. Unlike the Hamburg congregation, Oheb Tzedek allowed him to concertize, which meant a double income. The Rosenblatts needed it, because the ten of them were always surrounded by admirers who had come from half-a-continent away to hear Yossele daven.

The family not only fed these uninvited guests, they also entertained them with *Shabbos z'miros* sung around the table. These quasi-liturgical hymns would be followed by the children answering questions put to them by their father. Taube's role was act as moderator.

"So tell me, *kinderlekh*," Yossele begins. "Which new words in English did you learn this week?"

One of the youngest pipes up, "Sharrap, Poppa."

"Sharrap?" wonders Yossele, "what does it mean?"

"I dunno, Poppa," says the youngster.

Taube, seeing that her husband is truly perplexed, explains. “It means ‘Shut up,’ Yossele.”

Her husband ponders this for a moment. “*Azoy*,” he murmurs in that liquid-gold lower register of his, “and what other words did you learn?”

“Geddaddaheah, Poppa,” answers a second child.

“Geddaddaheah,” exclaims Yossele, “what language is that?”

Taube tells him, “it’s English, my dear; it means ‘get out of here.’”

“This is English?” demands Yossele.

Whereupon all the children reply, “Yes, poppa, it’s the way *kids* speak English!”

“At this point their mother, exasperated, breaks in. “It’s the way English is spoken *here*, children. Compared to this, Hamburg was the Garden of Eden! There, at least we lived among persons of breeding and etiquette. And what have we here? Riffraff collected from the four corners of the earth, people without manners or refinement.”

“But Momma,” one of the older children counters, “they don’t mean any disrespect just because they talk like Americans.”

Another child seconds the motion. “Would you rather we sounded like greenhorns, Momma?”

A third one adds, “Yeah, remember our German accents when we first got off the boat—everyone made fun of us!”

“But not any more!” proclaims a fourth, as the younger ones chime in, “now we’re real Yankees...” and all shout, “**Nephews of our Uncle Sam!!**”

“Children...” admonishes Taube, that’s just what I was talking about. There are enough loudmouthed young people in Manhattan without you adding to the number.”

And Yossele, ever the peacemaker, reassures her. “It’s alright, Taube. Becoming Americanized means getting used to change—*quickly*. Last year when the Emperor Franz Josef died we were still *Austrian* citizens. So we mourned him along with thousands of other Jews who’d come over here. This year, 1917, you and I became American citizens and, along with those same thousands, we’re suddenly *at war* with Austria!

To help the Jews of war-torn Eastern Europe, Yossele began singing regularly at benefits. Initially, the Central relief Committee had organized a concert in New York City’s Hippodrome that drew 6,000 people and raised a quarter-million dollars. The committee quickly decided to send him on a

cross-country tour to keep the effort going. He traveled through Newark, Philadelphia, Scranton, Buffalo, Toronto, Montreal, Milwaukee and as far west as Chicago, where the head of an opera company heard him.

The impresario, Cleofante Campanini, thought so highly of Yossele's singing that he made an immediate offer for him to sing the part of Eleazar in Jacques Halévy's opera, *La Juive*. Campanini called it "a glorification of the Jewish religion, in which the role of the Jewess will be sung by Rosa Raisa, who is a native of Odessa." He offered Rosenblatt five performances at \$1,000 each, plus expenses, with no performance for him on Friday or Saturday. Nor would he have to cut off his beard. Nothing in his appearance on the stage of the Chicago Grand Opera Company would in any way be a reflection upon his Orthodox faith.

To Campanini's great surprise, Yossele turned down this magnanimous offer—on religious grounds. The newspapers reported: "The world is electrified by Cantor Rosenblatt's courage... He is a true Maccabean... who has upheld the honor of the American synagogue... What he has done is to sanctify the Holy name in the noblest possible way."

Yossele couldn't believe the public's reaction to his stand. His refusal of Campanini's offer enhanced his reputation beyond anything he'd ever dreamed of! He was invited to participate in a Liberty Loan rally on the steps of the New York Public Library. It was in honor of troops who were sailing overseas, but it was an honor for him as well. Among the thousands who attended was Enrico Caruso, whose thrilling voice had sold over twenty million dollars' worth of War Bonds.

The occasion called for something that would stir people's emotions. Since the liturgy contained nothing patriotic, he settled on the next best thing, a prayer whose refrain was in march-time: *R'tseih asirosom* from the Midnight S'liḥos (Penitential) service before Rosh Hashanah: *Hear our song in the silence of night; we who pray, protect us with Your might!*

It went over wonderfully. Its words and music seemed to fall in step with the popular anthem by George M. Cohan: with God's help, America's doughboys were going to get the job done—***Over There!***

When the program ended, Caruso climbed the library steps and embraced Yossele. Something of the legendary tenor's aura must have rubbed off on him. From then on, people began to think of his singing in operatic terms even though he had refused to enter that world. For one thing, what could he do as an encore to *La Juive*? How many roles are there for a bearded tenor who is also an Orthodox Jew? Instead, Yossele composed music in operatic style, for another obscure prayer text: *Matsil oni mei-ḥozok mim-menu*.

You save the afflicted from the powerful,
The impoverished from those who prey on them.
Who resembles You?
Who is equal to You?
Who compares to You?—
great, mightily, awe-inspiring, transcendent God,
to whom heaven and earth belong.
We will praise, acclaim, and bless your holy name,
fulfilling David's words:
Let my soul bless *ADONAI*,
and every fiber of my being praise God's holy name."

The prayer is recited just before the cantor picks up the chant from a lay *ba'al t'fillah* on holy day mornings, and Yossele based his setting on themes from two operas. The first, Halévy's *La Juive*, was only fitting and proper, since that role had been his for the taking. The second, Giacomo Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, was his private retribution against all the barbers who had tried to make their reputation at the expense of Rosenblatt's luxuriant black beard.

Initially he might have pictured the piece as a duet between various characters of both operas—the manipulative Spanish jack-of-all-trades, *Figaro*—and the innocent French maid, *Rachel*. In his mind's eye perhaps he saw himself as Rachel's father, the venerable scholar, *Eleazar*, seated at a table, studying the Mask of Tragedy that lay upon it.

Looking up, the old Talmudist sees standing before him a raven-haired Andalusian beauty, *Rosina*, exotically veiled in a multicolored silken *manton*. In front of her face she coyly holds the Mask of Comedy. She seems to be inviting and mocking him at the same time. So much so that on the recording—towards the end of this surreal duet in the guise of a prayer monologue, Yossele appears to be playing both roles—that of a heroic-voiced tenor dashing off cantorial roulades in sequences that ascend to a resounding B-flat, and that of a coloratura soprano whose flute-like trills leap repeatedly to a ringing F above High C, before cascading downward two-and-a-half octaves into the abyss that lay ahead...

Matsil ani

Text: P'sukei D'Zimra for Holy Days,
Sabbath and Festivals

Music: Josef Rosenblatt
Arrangement: Charles Davidson

1 Moderato

Voice

Piano

Moderato

Ma - tsil a - ni mei - ha-zak mi -

8

me - nu, v' - a - ni v' - ev - yon

15 *poco rit.*

mi goz lo; v' - a - ni v' - ev - yon

poco rit.

22

mi goz lo, v' - a - ni v' -

28

ev - yon mi goz - lo.

34 *Freely*

Mi yid - meh lakh u - mi yish - veh lakh u - mi

42

ya-rokh lakh, ha - eil hag-ga-dol hag-gi - bor v' han-no-ra, eil el - yon

48 *rit.*

ko-nei sha-ma-yim va - a - rets. N'hal-lel- kha un' shab-bei-ha-

54

kha u-n'-fa-er- kha u- n' - va - reikh_

61

et_ sheim_ kod

65

A Tempo

she-kha ka - a - mur_

A Tempo

69

73

Mi yid-meh lakh u -

78

mi yish-veh lakh u - mi, u -

82

mi ya-a-rokh lakh, ha - eil ha-ga-dol ha-gi -

86

bor v'-han-no - ra, eil el - yon, ko-nei sha

90

ma - yim va - a - rets. N' - hal - lel - kha, u n' - shab - bei - ha - kha u - n' -

8^{vb}-----

94

fa - er - kha, u - n' - va - reikh_ et_ sheim_ kod - sh' kha, n' - hal - lel - kha, u - n' -

98

shab - bei - ha - kha, u - n' - fa - - - - er - kha; n' -

102

hal - lel - kha, u - n' - shab - bei - ha - kha, u - n' - fa - er - kha, u - n' -

8^{vb}-----

105

va - reikh et___ sheim.kod sh' kha, n' - ha - lel kha, u-n'-shab-bei-ha-kha, u-n'

109

fa - - - - - er - kha. Ka - a-mur l'

113

da - vid, bor-khi naf-shi et ha - sheim,_____ v'-khol k'-ra-

117

vai, v' - khol k' - ra - vai et sheim_ kod - sho; et, _____

121

pp v' - khol k' - ra - vai, v' - khol k' - ra -

ppp

123

vai_ et sheim, _____

126

ff et ³ sheim_ kod - sho. *ff*

ff

8vb

Was he dreaming, like the biblical Joseph? Did he imagine the scene onstage, or those fabulous years of success when the sun and the stars seemed within his grasp? People were calling it the Golden Age of *Khazonus*. When the Great War ended, so many excellent European cantors came to the United States all at once that it was impossible to determine which one of them was the best. To answer that question, the opinion of an expert like Musicology professor Arno Nadel of Berlin was needed. In an article on the subject, he'd likened the three leading cantors to three European heads of state. He designated Yossele Rosenblatt of New York as the Franz Josef of cantors, due to his pre-eminence. Zavel Kwartin from Budapest, on the other hand, was elegant—like Edward VII of England. And the young upstart from Vilna, Mordechai Hershman, he compared to Mussolini—with a moustache!

Yossele was flattered, of course. Still, he kept trying to improve himself. After the encounter with Caruso, he went out of his way to meet other men of great accomplishment in their field. Thomas Edison charted his voice in his New Jersey laboratory, and he told Yossele that it displayed the largest amplitude of any vocal instrument he had ever recorded. To Yossele the chart looked like the outline of mountains he'd passed on his many railroad trips. One journey in particular came to mind.

It was late on a Friday, somewhere in the Midwest en route from Miami, Florida to Portland, Oregon. The train had been delayed, and Yossele realized he wasn't going to reach the West Coast by sundown. He asked the conductor to let him off at the nearest town with a Jewish population. The man consulted his schedule, and the next moment, Yossele was standing on Main Street in the middle of nowhere. The town evidently consisted of two Jews and a thousand Native Americans, all of whom showed up to stare at the bearded stranger. It turned out to be quite a Shabbos. The lone Jewish couple (who ran a general store) took him in, fed him dairy food and vegetables, and on Saturday night they kept playing a recording of his, over and over. It was Yossele's lively rendering of the High Holiday prayer,

K'vakarat ro'eh edro, ma'avir tsono ta^hat shivto...

As a shepherd tends his flock, making sure they're all accounted for,
So do You, O God, take note of every living creature.

Hearing what sounded like a familiar rhythmic chant, the local Indians started to perform their traditional tribal dance in his honor, which prompted Rosenblatt to join them in a contrapuntal *obbligato*... Welcome to Pendleton, Indiana!

In nineteen hundred and twenty-five Yossele Rosenblatt awoke from his dream—but unlike Pharaoh in Egypt—he had no one to interpret it. Seven

years of plenty had suddenly come to an end and seven lean years were about to begin. How did it happen? While traveling from Montreal, he'd been approached by two bearded gentlemen wearing black suits and hats. He felt right at home with them. They quoted entire discussions from the Talmud as if they were in a yeshivah instead of on a train. It seemed as if they were eager to pass on their learning to others.

They spoke of a new weekly publication they were about to launch; it was to be called *Dos likht fun yisroeil*—"The Light of Israel." Unlike any other newspaper, it would appear in Hebrew, Yiddish and English. It would feature articles by the greatest scholars our people had produced. Finally—and this was the clincher—"it was guaranteed to strengthen traditional Judaism in all of North America!"

They told him, "with our know-how, plus your name and backing, it cannot fail. And once it's established it will provide you with a steady source of income, so you can cut back on all the travel and singing you do."

"But gentlemen," said Yossele, "I know so little about the newspaper business; I'm a *khazn*, plain and simple."

"That is absolutely no problem, *we* will take care of the business end."

"And as president of the corporation, all *you* have to do is finance it."

"Meantime, say nothing about this to Mrs. Rosenblatt until the first issue appears."

"You know what the Talmud says: "Discuss financial matters with a woman and she'll raise enough objections to spoil the whole project."

Yossele was hooked. "Allright," he agreed, "it is obvious that you are both upstanding individuals with only the highest motives in this venture. I'll back you in it; give me the documents to sign."

Shortly thereafter, Taube and Yossele had the worst quarrel of their thirty-three year marriage. Taube began it.

"Yosssel, do you remember the song they sang at our wedding?"

"You mean *Keitsad m'rakdim*— 'How does one dance before the bride'?"

"Yes, and do you remember what follows?"

"Certainly, *ishah na'ah va-hasudah*—'a kind and understanding bride'—Why are you asking?"

"Have I not been a kind and understanding wife to you?"

"Of course, Taube; is there some point to these questions?"

"The point is that lately you have not been treating me as your life's partner."

“What do you mean; you think I am keeping secrets from you?”

“That is *exactly* what I mean. How else could every check I send out to pay the monthly bills come back stamped ‘Insufficient Funds?’”

“Don’t worry, Taube, I’ll make good the shortage. I’m still able to sing; I’ll simply sing more often.”

“That won’t do, Yossel, I want to know what’s been happening to whatever money we had left after all your charitable donations. To whom—or to what—did you donate this time?”

“I’m telling you it will work itself out. As my father (of blessed memory) used to say: ‘If God gives us bread, people will supply the butter!’”

“Yossel, when you’re ready to tell me what you’ve done with the money, I’ll be ready to listen!” And with that, Taube left the room.

It was the first and only time Taube ever walked out on her husband. It caused him such grief that he told her everything. Aside from sinking their life’s savings into the paper, he had gone into personal debt by borrowing from their friends. He was in over his head and couldn’t swim; the only way out was to declare voluntary bankruptcy.

Shortly thereafter a Bankruptcy Referee addressed Yossele at a formal hearing.

“Mr. Rosenblatt, I’ve reviewed the contents of your petition. It lists your assets at \$33,000. Of that amount, \$27,000 represents the value of your house. Your liabilities, due to promissory notes that you endorsed as *The Light of Israel’s* president, totals \$192,000.

Yossele’s attorney pointed out that his client’s motives were honorable from first to last.

“Counselor, I’m inclined to agree,” said the Referee, “and only for that reason this Court is allowing him to default on his obligations.”

“Your Honor,” if my client had any assets remaining after withdrawing from the publication, he himself would have distributed them among his creditors.”

“As it is, Counselor, your client’s insolvency has left high and dry many people who believed in him and who contributed to the periodical on the strength of that belief”

“Just as he believed in what he considered an idealistic venture, Your Honor.”

“Idealistic or not, Counselor, the effect of these proceedings will be to wipe out your client’s indebtedness. In fact, he is now free from further liability.”

Yossele could no longer contain himself.

“May I say something, Your Honor?”

“You may.”

“Your Honor, I have declared bankruptcy not to escape liability but to gain time. Eventually I hope to make good every penny. God has given me a voice which I shall use to fulfill my obligations, no matter what the letter of the law says!”

To raise the huge sum of money he had promised to repay in court, Yossele turned to an art form that was still thriving before the new medium of talking movies caught on: Vaudeville. It was cheaper than going to concerts, and a lot more varied. He shared the stage with Paul Whiteman, Fanny Brice, The Great Houdini, Sophie Tucker, Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, George Jessel, and the Marx Brothers. Each of them recognized what they had in common, and overlooked the differences in lifestyle. Yossele’s act consisted of three numbers: Irish, Italian, and Russian. For an encore he usually did an Irish miniature, *Mother MacRee*, that brought down the house.

When vaudeville peaked, Yossele sailed for Europe where concerts were still important, especially to Jewish audiences. The brand-new medium of radio carried news of his travels across the continent.

Hello to our listeners back home in Warsaw, this is your correspondent, Herman Svet. We are broadcasting from Berlin’s Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue, immediately following Yossele Rosenblatt’s thrilling concert. He’s standing now in the midst of his cantorial colleagues who are welcoming him back to Germany, the country where he first rose to international prominence some twenty years ago. Cantor Rosenblatt appears to be in fine form. Let me try to hear what he’s saying... He’s telling about how *different* Jewish life in the United States is from what we’re used to here in Europe... He’s mimicking an America-born cantor who’s trying to improvise as he holds the cup of wine... Instead of concluding the blessing with *Borei p’ri ha-gafen*, he forgets where he is and blurts out: ***Borei p’ri hashabbat!***

After that tour, Yossele was worn out. Twenty-five appearances in six weeks drained him physically. The poverty of Polish and Lithuanian Jewry, particularly in Bialystok and Vilna, drained him emotionally. Back home, the whole country was suffering through the Great Depression’s early stages. Yossele finally parted company with the First Congregation Oheb Tzedek, which could no longer afford to retain him. Concert engagements were non-existent.

He repaid creditors whatever amounts he could, but when they learned that he was without a pulpit and had no further means of earning a livelihood, they hounded him without letup. Yet he never despaired of God’s help. In

nineteen hundred and thirty-two, during the last High Holiday service that he would ever lead, Yossele sang more fervently than ever, so convinced was he that things would soon turn around.

The Rosenblatts had planned that they would settle in *Erets yisrael* once he retired. In the Spring of nineteen hundred and thirty-three, he got his chance to test that plan when he was given the opportunity to tour Palestine. It was with a film crew that planned to shoot him singing pre-recorded prayers at various biblical sites throughout the land. He combined this with a full itinerary of recitals and services, including the Festivals of Pesah and Shavuot. Filming began the day after his last service.

It had been beastly hot in the Galilee, at Rachel's Tomb and the Ruins of Jericho. On June the 18th, after Hevron and on the way down to the Dead Sea, his heart gave out. He was driven back to his hotel in Jerusalem; by the next morning it was all over. The newspapers that evening read:

YOSSELE ROSENBLATT DIES SUDDENLY

Famous cantor stricken after ten weeks of daily appearances here in six different cities. World's best-known hazzan was filming "The Dream of My People" at *M'arat ha-makhpeilah*. His close friends, Cantors Hershman and Kwartin, to be among the pallbearers.

High on the Mount of Olives' western slope ha-Rav Kook summed up Yossele's life for the ages.

... He lived fifty-one years, whose numerical value is formed by the letters *nun-aleph*. Those letters also spell the word *Na*—"please." So many of the prayers he offered on our behalf began with that word: *please* be merciful to Your people; *please* do not turn them away from Your holy Presence. Now, *Ribono shel olam*, we beg you on his behalf: *please* do not turn Your countenance from him... as he approaches the place where Your glory dwells.

Morai u-g'virotai, the Midrash tells us that two hundred and forty years prior to the sixth millennium, the waters of the deep will well up again as they did in the days of Noah... covering everything in the world except *Erets yisrael*. We shall reach that point at the end of this 20th century, by which time most of us will have joined Khazn Rosenblatt in the World to Come.

Until then, may he serve as our Advocate of Righteousness in that world, just as he was our *Meilits yosher* in this world. May his lifelong prayer for the re-establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth upon this Holy Land be answered in our day. For holiness flows from two sources: the Temple of Old, and the Redemption to come. We stand closer to the Final Redemption than our Talmud sages did to the Temple era! And, although today we are shrouded in the gloom of bereavement, already the light of the *Mashi'ah* can be seen, and the reverberation of his footsteps can be felt—on this very mountain. His voice we have all heard—in the heartfelt song of our departed.

Yossele, in you, *Ha-kadosh barukh hu* gave us a deposit. Now The Holy One has come to demand: *Heikhan pikdoni*—“Where is my Deposit?”

You were that deposit, Yossele—given for us to guard and to treasure these past fifty-one years. Now it is time for us to *return* that treasure to its Depositor. Go to your eternal rest in peace, *Hazzan ha-dor*—Prayer Messenger for our World—**the World of Yossele Rosenblatt!**

*Yossele Rosenblatt's life and times were paradigmatic of our great-grandparents' immigrant experience early in the 20th century. His dignified yet humble appearance personified the traditional Jew to American audiences more than that of any other European-born cantor. His compositions are still widely sung, and his recordings remain ever popular. This article draws upon many sources for its facts, chiefly Rabbi Samuel Rosenblatt's 1954 biography of his father, republished as **The Immortal Cantor**, by the Cantors Assembly in 2002. It also derives from the present writer's play of the same name, with music arranged by Charles Davidson, and premiered at the 46th Annual Cantors Assembly Convention in Philadelphia, 1993. The dramatic script, including vocal score and piano accompaniment, are available from <<jdlevine@comcast.net>>.*

The Friendly Rival: Mordechai Hershman (1888-1941)

Gleaned from many sources

If the styles of Zavel Kwartin and Yossele Rosenblatt epitomized *T'fillat ha-regesh* (emotional prayer), the singing of their genial competitor, Mordechai Hershman, left no doubt that he belonged to the camp of *T'fillat ha-seder* (orderly prayer). He had served in the Russian army before and during the Great War of 1914-1918, and he sang the same way a soldier fights: with the optimal force needed to obtain a quick and total victory. He came at his listeners like an erupting volcano, overwhelming everything in his path. His voice displayed all the fire associated with the best operatic tenors, yet was able to sustain the



most delicate *pianissimo*, in a seemingly endless legato line. The voice gained in power and volume during his middle years, dwindling to a silver thread only at the very end when, weakened by diabetes, he died at the age of 52.

Born in Cherinov, Russia, he was orphaned at the age of six, taken under the local cantor's tutelage at age eight, adopted by his grandfather four years later and brought as an apprentice to Cantor Dorfman of Soloviv. Semi-starvation was his daily diet until being appointed Assistant Cantor at the Great Synagogue in Vilna in 1905, for 12 rubles a month. When the Chief Cantor died, Hershman auditioned for the position and won out over 25 rivals. Drafted for military service, he was soon released in order to resume his cantorial duties. Extensive concertizing—including multiple solo appearances in which he performed operatic arias with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra—brought him a recording contract and the attention of choir leader Leo Low, who recommended him to Temple Beth El of Borough Park in Brooklyn, New York.

That synagogue—the only Orthodox “Temple” in America (in order to compete with Conservative Temple Emanuel a block away)—was located in the fastest-growing Modern Orthodox community in the United States. Hundreds of affiliated young families attended services every Shabbat. The

Temple's acoustics provided natural amplification by means of a high-domed ceiling, and proved particularly suited to the bright timbre of Hershman's lyrico-spinto tenor. As a result, his reputation soon matched those of Kwartin and Rosenblatt, whose tenures in Borough Park overlapped his.

When promenading with his entourage of devotees, Hershman would usually be leading two enormous Russian wolfhounds on a tandem leash. He wore a greatcoat, complete with beaver collar and matching top hat, in the style of an Old World baron. To complete the picture of a nobleman holding court, there was his commanding voice. Its sheer brilliance was mesmerizing; once he had introduced a number you always heard him in your inner ear no matter who sang it later on. So it was with *V'hayah b'aharit ha-yamim* ("It Shall Come to Pass at the End of Days"; Isaiah 2: 2-4).

Its words were set by Cantor Pinchos Jassinowsky (1886-1954) in the Prophetic mode, because during the Roaring Twenties the sky seemed the only limit. During that decade, jazz musicians took their cue from the spectacular vocalism featured by cantors on best-selling 78-rpm recordings. Trumpeter Louis Armstrong's 1928 groundbreaker, *West End Blues*,¹ opened with a rollercoaster of a cadenza that can best be described as 'cantorial.' According to one critic, it "inaugurated an era of modern musical expression where individuality and genius could dazzle and shine."²

In the Jewish world as well, anything seemed possible, including the building of a Hebrew University on the summit of Jerusalem's Mount Scopus. Pinchos Jassinowsky dedicated this apocalyptic vision to the promise held forth by that brand-new institution of higher Jewish learning, and Hershman sang Jassinowsky's Haftarah-based vision with the fervor of a latter-day prophet.

V'yoreinu midrakhav v'neilkhah b'orhotav

Let the God of Jacob teach us, that we may walk in His ways

For out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the ways of God from Jerusalem!

1 After King Oliver's recording earlier that same year.

2 John Edward Hasse, "Louis Armstrong's Revolution," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 14-15, 2008.

The Prophecy of Isaiah

(Excerpt)

Text: Isaiah, 2: 2 - 3

Music: Pinchas Jassinowsky, 1925

1 **Moderato**

V'-ha-yah_____ b'-

Moderato

mf *a tempo* *mf* *p*

7

a-ha-rit ha-ya - mim, v' - ha - yah b' - a - ha-rit, b' - a - ha-rit ha-ya -

12 *con estro poetico*

- mim. Na-khon yih - yeh_____ har_____ beit a-do-

mf *p*

17 *a tempo*

nai b' - rosh he - ha - rim, v' - ni - sa mig - va - ot, v' - ni -

4 *a tempo*

20 *ten.*

sa mig - va - ot. v' - na - ha - ru ei - lav

p *accel.* *ten.* 6

23 *Recit.*

kol ha - go - yim v' - ha - l' - khu

energico *f*

27

Lento con devozione

p v' - hal' - khu a - mim rab - bim v'

Lento con devozione

pp *ben legato*

30

, *poco a poco cresc.*

am' - ru, l' - khu v'na - a - leh el -

poco a poco cresc.

33

har a - do - nai, el beit, e - lo -

35

f

hei ya - a - kov, v' - yo - rei - nu mid - ra -

38

khav, v' - yo - rei - nu mid - ra - khav,

p

41

v' - neil - kha b' - or - ho - tav,

43

v' - neil - kha b' - or - ho - tav.

f

Maestoso alla marcia

47

f
v' - hal' - khu a - mim rab - bim v' -

p *energico*
ff
Maestoso alla marcia

50

am - ru l' - khu, l' - khu v' - na - a - leh; l' - khu v' - na - a - leh, el

53

har a - do - nai. el - beit - e - lo -

55

hei - ya - a - kov, v' - yo - rei - nu mid - ra - khav v' -

con fiducia

57

rall.

neil - kha b'or - lo-tav, ki mi-tzi-yon tei tsei to-rah

60

rall.

62

u'-d'-var, ud' var a-do -

f

64

ten.

- nai mi-ru-sha - la yim.

ff

Red. *

The Paragon of Understatement: David Roitman (1888-1943)

Gleaned from many sources

The city of Vilna enjoyed such a pronounced Jewish presence that when Napoleon stopped there in 1812 during the catastrophic retreat of his Grand Army from Moscow, he reportedly named it “The Jerusalem of Lithuania.” Its Great Synagogue, which dated from 1633, conformed to a municipal regulation that it stand no taller than surrounding buildings. So it did, when viewed from the exterior. Being built deep into the ground, however, the Great Synagogue’s interior height was beyond belief. The vaulted ceiling appeared to rise in tandem with the fame of its cantors, all of whom bore the title *shtodt khazn* or “City Cantor.”



David Roitman—who served as *shtodt khazn* after David Moshe Steinberg (1870-1941) and before Mordechai Hershman—was the most intellectually inclined among those who held the office. He composed not only a complete liturgical cycle, but also a comprehensive repertoire of songs that have become classics. From listening intently to visiting Klezmer musicians as a child in Ukraine, he acquired an uncanny ability to replicate the limpid softness of various instruments, especially the clarinet. He later transferred this skill into the pleading *mezza voce* that became his calling card.

At the age of eight he was appointed unofficial assistant (*hazzan sheini*) to his town’s High Holy Day cantor. Soon thereafter, he was apprenticed to a series of hazzanim until he came under the tutelage of Ya’akov Shmuel Maragovsky (1856-1952), known as Zeidel Rovner, after the town of Rovno where he served as hazzan.¹

He accepted his first position at age 20, and after moving through two more posts in the next two years, he happened to daven unannounced in Vilna one Shabbat, and was immediately engaged as *shtodt khazn*. After four years he moved to St. Petersburg, where the Bolshevik Revolution caused him to

1 In New York, years later, Roitman would return the favor to his old teacher, singing as part of an impromptu cantorial choir along with several colleagues, accompanying Rovner as he recited the Order of *Kinot*—elegaic liturgical poems over the destruction of both Temples—on the morning of Tishah B’Av.

uproot his family twice more—to Odessa and finally, in 1920—to the United States and Manhattan’s Congregation Shaare Zedek where he remained until his death in 1943.

Roitman’s tenure in New York, particularly during the 1930s, saw open anti-Semitism run riot in the U.S. and Canada. *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a scurrilous late-19th century Czarist calumny against Jews everywhere, had been republished a decade earlier, in the hundreds of thousands, by industrialist Henry Ford’s newspaper—the *Dearborn Independent*. It was still widely read and believed by the blue-collar masses. This only encouraged rabble-rousers like the pro-Nazi Roman Catholic priest out of Detroit, Father Charles Coughlin. Through a syndicated radio program that reached 16 million listeners every week, Coughlin branded the few destitute Jewish refugees who were admitted during the Depression years as dangerous subversives responsible for every problem faced by out-of-work Americans. North of the border, similar unrest drove Canada’s Parliament to severely limit immigration and pave the way for Fascist-leaning politicians like Minister of Labour Adrien Arcand to publicly urge the boycotting of all Jewish businesses.

It was a time for North American Jews to become invisible and heed the advice given their Eastern European grandparents 70 years before by the *Has-kalah* (Enlightenment) poet, Yehudah Leib Gordon: *Heveih y’hudi b’veitekha v’adam b’tseitekha* —“at home be observant, but at large, be unobtrusive.” David Roitman’s introspective, self-abasingly plaintive style suited the moment perfectly, as did the text of his acclaimed setting for Psalm 24, sung on the Eve of Rosh Hashanah:

Mi ya’aleh b’har adonai? n’ki khapayim u-var leivav...

Who may ascend God’s holy mountain?

Only one with clean hands and pure heart.

L'david mizmor

Text: Psalm 24

Music: David Roitman

Piano: Charles Heller

1 **Freely**

3 tr. 3

5

4

L' - da - vid miz - mor la - do - nai ha - a - rets um' - lo - ah,

(Ped. ad lib sempre)

8

3 3 3

tei - veil v' - yosh - vei - vah. Ki

12

3 3 3 3

hu al ya - mim y' - sa - dah

14

v' al n' - ha - rot y' - kho - n' - ne - ha.

17

Mi ya - a - leh v' - har a - do - nai, u -

20

mi ya - kum, u - mi ya - kum bim - kom kod - sho. N'

23

ki kha - pa - yim, n' - ki kha - pa - yim u - var lei - vav a - sher lo na - sa la -

26

shav_ naf - shi v' - lo nish - ba_ l' - mir - mah_

30

Yi - sa v' - ra - khah, v' - ra - khah mei - eit a - do - nai. uts' -

33

da - kah, uts' - da - kah, uts' - da - kah_ mei - e - lo - hei_ yish - o.

36

a tempo
Zeh_ dor dor - shav

40 *freely*

m'-vak-shei fa-ne - kha; zeh dor dor-shav m'-vak-shei fa-

44

ne - kha, zeh dor dor-shav m'-vak-shei fa-ne - kha, m'-vak-shei fa-ne - kha ya -

48

kov, se - lah. S' - u sh' o-rim ro-shei - khem, v'-hi-

52

nas - u pit-hei-o - lam v' - ya - vo me-lekh, me-lekh ha-ka-vod.

p *rit...* *p* *colla parte*

56

Mi zeh me - lekha - ka - vod. a - do - nai i - zuz v' - gi - bosr, a - do - nai

59

gi - bor, gi - bor mil - ha - mah. S' -

61

u sh' o - rim ro - shei - khem, us' - u pit - hei o - lam, v' - ya - vo

64

me - lekha - ka - vod. Mi hu zeh - me - lekha -

66

ka - vod; mi hu zeh me-lekh ha-ka - vod, a-do - nai ts'-va-ot

70

hu me - lekh ha - ka - vod, hu me - lekh ha -

71

ka - vod, se - lah.

8^{va} 8^{vb}

The Tragically Short Career of Josef Shlisky (1894-1955)

After B. H. Stambler

Josef Shlisky is not well known today, yet his God-given vocal ability and cantorial skill brought him such well-deserved acclaim during a brief span of time, that his tragic story cries for inclusion in any survey of 20th-century hazzanut. Born in 1894 not far from Lodz, Poland, his voice had developed into a beautiful boy soprano by the age of four and he began to sing with local choirs. At the age of seven he was abducted, along with six other choir boys, by an unscrupulous cantor who told their parents he was touring with them to London. Instead, he hijacked them to a synagogue choir in Toronto, Canada. Luckily, the young singer was also given gainful employment by a businessman who dealt in rag conversion. The arrangement allowed him to sleep in the company's warehouse.



Six years later, shortly after Josef's Bar Mitzvah, one of his uncles emigrated to Canada and provided him with a home until his marriage at the early age of 17. He found more permanent work in a factory branch of the T. Eaton Department Store, where the owner's wife heard him singing and was so enthusiastic about his voice that she offered to help finance his musical education. With Mrs. Eaton's backing he matriculated at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto, from which he was graduated in 1917 with a Bachelor of Music degree.

In 1919 he made his debut at Town Hall in New York. A critic described him as having "a natural voice of limpid purity, a liquid diction... a melting pianissimo like a bird's woodnotes wild, and a full-throated crescendo—high, clear as a bell, and altogether manly."

In 1920 he was accepted as High Holiday Cantor at the Slonimer Synagogue on the Lower East Side of Manhattan and given a two-year contract immediately afterwards. He studied hazzanut with Samuel Malavsky, and was soon considered one of the city's leading cantors. He served at the Rouma-

nian Synagogue downtown, Anshe Poland of Harlem, Talmud Torah Toras Moshe of the Bronx, and Shaare Tefillah of Brooklyn. He also concertized and guest-officiated as a cantor extensively. These performances, together with his radio appearances, brought him to the attention of a wide audience throughout the United States and Canada. He even considered an operatic career, but chose to devote himself to hazzanut instead.

At the height of his powers he suffered a paralytic stroke, and never sang again after Passover of 1934. He remained an invalid until his death in 1955.

Shlisky's crystalline tenor earned him not only fame but fortune through contracts with all the principal recording companies. Still, while he was able, he gave freely of his time and resources to others who—like himself—had arrived in the New World penniless, and gave generously of his vocal talent to benefit charitable causes. If singing indeed opens a window to one's soul, Josef Shlisky was truly a paragon, for his recordings reveal the unwavering vocal line of an angel. The following transcription of his *R'tseih vimnuhateinu* ("Accept Our Rest"), recited on Friday night, is lowered a minor third, and even then its rapidly sweeping cadenzas extend up to high Bb (high Db on the recording), every note ringing true and clear. To his credit, Shlisky used melismatic runs only as a graceful way of getting from interpretive point A to point B, never as an end in themselves, and always to serve the liturgical text.

God of our ancestors, accept our rest...

Gladden us through Your ultimate redemption...

as we praise You for sanctifying the Sabbath.

If only verbal description could enable readers to hear the limpid yet clarion peal of this ill-fated singer's pliant tenor as it plumbed the depths and scaled the heights of two full and throbbing octaves, through willpower alone seeming to sound even the white spaces between the recitative's written notes.

This capsule biography is adapted from B. H. Stambler's liner notes on Collectors Guild LP CG 601, 1960 (out of print), Cantor Josef Shlisky: "... and on the Sabbath." The music is transcribed from Side 1, Band 4 of that recording [JAL].

R'tseih vimnuhateinu

Text: Friday Night Liturgy
Transcribed by Joseph A. Levine from
Collectors Guild LP CG 601, Side 1, Band 1

Music: Josef Shlisky
Piano: Charles Heller

1 *Unhurried*

E - lo - hei - nu vei-lo - hei a - vo -

mf *colla parte sempre*

5

tei - nu, r' - tseih

9

3

vim - m'nu - ha - tei - nu. Kad - d' - shei - nu b' -

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for the song 'R'tseih vimnuhateinu'. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system starts at measure 1, marked 'Unhurried'. The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and includes the instruction 'colla parte sempre'. The second system starts at measure 5 and features a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a time signature change to 3/4. The vocal line includes a trill (tr) over the word 'nu'. The piano accompaniment continues with complex chordal textures. The third system starts at measure 9 and features a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) and a time signature change to 3/4. The vocal line includes a triplet (3) over the word 'nu'. The piano accompaniment continues with complex textures. The score ends at measure 12.

13

mits - vo - te - - kha v' tein hel - kei - nu b' - to - ra - te - -

16

kha, sab - ei - nu mi - tu - ve - - kha v' sam -

20

-hei - nu bi - shu - a - te - - - - kha v' -

23

ta - heir. — li - bei - - nu, li -

26

bei - nu, v' - ta - heir li - bei - nu

28

v' - ta - heir li - bei - nu,

31

v' - ta - heir li - bei - nu; v' - ta -

36

heir li -

37

bei - - - nu, *f* v' - ta - heir_ li -

colla parte sempre

39

bei - nu_ v' - ta-heir li- bei - nu_ l' - ov - d' -

43

kha_ *ff* be - e - met, l' - ov - d' -

47

kha_ be - e - met. *In stately fashion* V' - han - hi -

50

lei - nu, a - do - nai e - lo - hei - nu, b' - a - ha - vah u - v' - ra - tson

53

deliberato *tr* *con moto*

shab - bat kod - she - kha, v' - ya - nu hu vah yis - ra - eil m' - ka - d' -

58

shei sh' - me - - - kha. Ba - rukh a - tah a - do -

62

Drawn out

nai, m' - ka - ³ deish, m' - ka - deish; m'-ka-

65

deish ha-

66

shab - - - bat.

Yossele's Protégé: Samuel Malavsky (1894-1985)

Gleaned from many sources

Whenever the name of Samuel Malavsky comes under discussion, hazzanic aficionados think first of the RCA Victor recordings he made during the 1940s. These were reissued in the 1970s by Banner Recording Company, among them: *Shomei'a kol bikhyot* from Neilah, *Ha-vein yakir li efrayim* from Rosh Hashanah, *Maran d'vishmaya* from S'lihot, and *V'shamru* from Friday Night Ma'ariv. Malavsky self-published ten of the written scores with piano accompaniments in 1947 under the title, *Hebrew Traditional Cantorial Masterpieces*. They all lasted around four minutes, perfect for twelve-inch 78-rpm platters, and all exemplified heartfelt prayer that was deeply moving yet logically structured.



Generally overlooked, however, are several ten-inch recordings he'd made for Columbia a decade earlier, including a touching *Makhnisei rahamim* from S'lihot, an inspiring *T'ka b'shofar gadol* from the Weekday Amidah and an *Aheinu kol beit yisrael* from the Tahnanun section of Monday and Thursday morning that recapitulates in miniature the style of his mentor, Yossele Rosenblatt. The recordings appeared in 1932, a year before Yossele's untimely death. Taken together, they prove that if Rosenblatt was the "King of Cantors"—according to the hyperbole of contemporary press reports—then Malavsky was his Crown Prince, a worthy heir to that phenomenal falsetto, irresistibly appealing tone, and unquestioned sincerity.

The American public at large knew Shmuel Malavsky better from the recordings he made during his middle period with his two sons and four daughters, a family choir that he formed officially in 1947 and with which he toured widely after giving up a thirty-year battle to maintain his professional dignity in the face of petty-minded rabbinical sniping born of professional jealousy, and penurious synagogue boards who refused to pay him what he felt he was worth.¹ So beloved were the Malavsky Family Singers that on a 1952 tour of Israel, people would approach daughter Goldie, who possessed a gorgeous child-like alto voice and sang all the famous boy-solos in the family's

1 Hazzan Malavsky's interview with *The Elchanite* (New York: Talmudical Academy), 1948.

ensemble arrangements of hazzanut. Israeli audiences would shout: “Goldie Malavsky, stay here, and Golda Meir should go home!”²

The Malavsky Family Singers came into being around the Shabbat dinner table where they would spend hours singing *z’mirot*, harmonizing with each other and learning new pieces that Samuel composed. The children improvised natural harmonies and created a sound so impressive that it would attract the neighbors to come listen outside the open windows. During World War II the family received their first invitation to sing the High Holiday services together, in San Francisco. This group performance proved so successful that Samuel decided the family should move to New York where they would have more opportunities to capitalize on their collective talent... They traveled frequently, singing in concerts, leading services and appearing on the radio... Despite all the accolades, however, the Malavskys also attracted a great deal of opposition. They usually had to daven in special High Holiday and Passover services set up in hotels because the girls were not allowed to sing in Orthodox synagogues.³

Mordechai Yardeini⁴ cites an editorial from *The Jewish Journal of Toronto* for November 19, 1950, which reveals the hypocrisy of two prominent local Orthodox rabbis—identified by name—who had issued a ban against Hazzan Malavsky and his children officiating for Shabbat at a small *shul* on Dovercourt Road. Furthermore, those who issued the ban threatened to declare said *shul* a “Reform Temple” where religious Jews were forbidden to enter. Yet, the editorial stated,

during the previous High Holidays, two other Orthodox synagogues in Toronto had engaged mixed choirs with men and women who—unlike the Malavsky children, were total strangers to one another and certainly not members of a single family—had officiated for all the services of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur... Why did these same two prominent Orthodox Keepers of the Faith not issue a ban or even a warning against people attending services at these two offending synagogues?... Was it not simply a case of “money talks?” Members of these particular synagogues happened to be among the wealthiest Jews in Toronto—including the city’s leading Kosher butchers—for whom the aforementioned rabbis evidently had the greatest respect.

2 Malavsky Sisters’ interview with the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music., 1998., cited in Arianne Slack, “The Khazntes...,” *Journal of Synagogue Music*, 2007:68.

3 Arianne Slack Brown, “The Khazntes,” *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Fall 2007: 69-71.

4 “The Singing Malavsky Family,” *New York Vokhenblatt*, January 1951.

Samuel Malavsky was born in the Ukraine where he sang as a choirboy and later as a child cantor. In 1914 he came to the U.S. and found employment as a *shokhey*, a skill he had acquired while studying in yeshivot. One day, the butcher shop in whose back room he worked cleaning chickens, was visited by Yossele Rosenblatt. When the renowned cantor heard him singing, he immediately took him under his wing as a *ben bayit* (member of the household).⁵

One of Samuel's early cantorial positions was with Yossele's eldest son, Rabbi Samuel Rosenblatt, in Beth Tfiloh Congregation of Baltimore. The recording of *Aheinu kol beit yisrael* was made a few years later, during his tenure at B'nei Y'hudah in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, NY, where Mordechai Hershman was then serving as hazzan at Orthodox Temple Beth El. It was a time of great economic hardship and, like all hazzanim at the time, Malavsky had to accept a cut in salary. It was also an era when overt anti-Semitism flourished in North America, Jews becoming a scapegoat for every problem that beset the working poor.

Bad as this was, it paled next to what the Jews of Germany were experiencing—and what Polish Jews were about to experience—at the hands of the Nazi regime. Samuel Malavsky, who had internalized novel ideas in the supplicatory *Ahavah rabbah* mode from his mentor Rosenblatt's 1918 recording of *Aheinu kol beit yisrael*, reworked those ideas into a more universally singable recitative of the same text—in half the length. Its three minutes of straightforward yet musically rich and vocally effective hazzanut convey all the glory and pathos of early 20th-century Jewish existence. Malavsky's concise but little-known setting of this fervent plea is a paradigm of accessible virtuosity that allows the prayer to speak, a treasure that has been overlooked until now.

May the Ever-Present One take pity on the entire House of Israel
Who are in mortal danger, and bring them forth from trouble to safety,
From darkness to light and from subjection to redemption,... Amen.

5 B. H. Stambler, liner notes to *Sabbath with the Malavsky Family*, Banner LP BAS-1016, ca. 1958.

Aheinu kol beit yisra'eil

Text: Weekday Torah Service

Music: Samuel Malavsky, 1932
Transcribed by Joseph A. Levine from
a Columbia 78 RPM, 10" Recording

1

A - hei-nu, a-hei-nu, a hei - nu; a - hei-nu kol beit yis-ra - eil ha-n' -

5

tu-nim ba - tsa - rah, ba - tsa - - - - -

7

- - - - - rah; ba tsa - rah u - va - shiv - yah, ha - om' -

10

dim, ha - - - om' - dim; ha - om' - dim bein ba - yam u -

13

vein ba - ya - ba - shah. - A - hei - - - - - nu, a -

17

hei - nu kol beit, kol beit yis - ra - eil ha - n' - tu - nim, ha - n' - tu - nim ba -

20

tsa - ⁵ - rah u - va - shiv - yah, ha - om' - dim bein ba - yam u -

23

vein, ⁵ u - vein ba - ya - ba - shah, ham -

25

ma - kom y' - ra - heim, y' - ra - heim ⁵ a - lei - hem; ham - ma - kom y' - ra - heim, y -

28

ra - heim, y' - ra - heim, ham - ma - kom y' - ra - heim, y' - ra - heim ³ a lei - hem v' - yo -

31

tsi - eim mi - tsa - rah lir - va - hah ³ u - mei - a - fei - lah l' - o - rah, u - mi -

35

shiv - bud lig - ul - lah. Hash - ta ba - a - ga - la ³ u - viz - man kar - riv, v' -

38

no - mar, ⁵ v' - no - mar: a - mein.

The Visionary: Leib Glantz (1898-1964)

Gleaned from many sources

Hasidism was our people's last original creation, according to Gershon Scholem, who founded the Department of Jewish Mysticism at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Just so, a series of compositions in Hasidic style were among the last original creations of Hazzan Leib Glantz, then living in Israel.

For over 25 years his father Kalman had served as *sh'li'ah tsibbur* in the *beit midrash* of the Hasidic court at Talnoye, near Kiev, Ukraine. The Talner dynasty was known for its joyful niggunim, that part of the Hasidic lifestyle most emulated by Jews of other persuasions. Most of the great 20th-century hazzanim were either reared in a Hasidic environment or familiarized themselves sufficiently with its musical practice so that their singing was imbued with the same infectious spirit. If a hazzan had grown up in Northern Europe's more austere centers of Jewish learning—such as Lithuania—where Talmud was studied “with both thumbs,” he would still have spent a significant portion of his childhood singing *z'mirov* of Hasidic origin around the family's Shabbat or festival table.



By composing a set of such quasi-liturgical hymns in the Hasidic manner, Leib Glantz returned to his roots after years of overturning mountains with his declamatory style. He lavished upon the 10th-century Bhagdadi text *D'ror yikra* (“Proclaim Freedom for One and All”) the same musical inventiveness shown in any of his more grandiloquent settings, even managing to incorporate the particular filler syllables—*hai dee di-dee, hai dee di-dee, ha*—preferred by his fellow Talner Hasidim. He composed this *z'mirah* in the Sephardic pronunciation of modern-day Israel, to which he would emigrate in 1954, assuming the post of *Hazzan roshi* (Chief Cantor) at the Tiferet Tzvi Synagogue in Tel Aviv, and remaining active as a teacher and much sought-after guest artist during the last decade of his life.

He organized *D'ror yikra* into a classic A-B-A form. That is quite different from Hasidic procedure for *rikkud*—or “dance”—niggunim like this one. Usually it would be subject to endless repetition, climbing a half-step with each succeeding chorus until the pitch got too high for comfort, and then

dropping an octave so the process could begin all over again. As Glantz set it, this *z'mirah* became more of an art song than a niggun.

Leib Glantz did not need dance or repetition to arrive at a state of *hitlahavut* (ecstasy). From the time he first led a service for the Talner Rebbe at the age of four, his singing was already ecstatic. For proof, we need only note the utter assurance he brings to this gently skipping table song's second strophe, in which God asks Israel to show a desire for the restoration of Jerusalem:

D'rosh navi v'ulami...

n'ta soreik b'tokh karmi...

Seek My Temple and My Sanctuary...

plant a branch within My vineyard...

To this Divine invitation, Israel responds tit-for-tat:

Vot yesha ase'i imi...

sh'ei shav'at b'nei ami

First show us a sign of salvation...

heed the cry of Your people!

D'ror yikra

Text: Dunash ben Labrat

Music: Leib Glantz

Allegretto moderato

3 *Relaxed*

p D'-ror yik - ra l'-ven im bat v' - yin - tsor - khem__ k'-mo va - vat, —

5

n'-im shim khem, v'-lo yush - bat, sh' - vu v'-nu - fiu b' yom shab - bat.

7 *Lightly*

D'-rosh na - vi v'-u - la - mi v'-ot ye - sha a-seih i - mi, n'-

9

ta so - rek b'-tokh kar-mi, sh' - ei shav-at b'-nei a - mi;

11

-ei shav-at b'-nei a - mi. Ba-bam ba-bam

Agitato

13

ai-di-di-di ai-di-di-di ai _____ ai-di-di-di ai-di-di di ai-di-di-di ai-di-di-di

p *mf* *p*

15

ai Ai _____

mf *f*

17

ai-di-di-di ai-di-di-di ai _____ ai-di-di-di ai-di-di-di ai-di-di-di ai-di-di-di

p *mf* *p*

19

ai d'-rosh na-vi v'-u - la - mi, v'-

mf

21

ot ye - sha a-sei i - mi n' - ta so - rek b'-tokh kar - mi sh'-

23

1. ei shav - at b'-nei a-mi 2. -ei shav - at b'-nei a-mi.

25

D'ror yik - ra l' - ven im bat, v' - yin - tsor - khem k' - mo va - vat, n' -

27

im shim - khem v' - lo yush - bat, sh' - vu v' - nu - hu b' yom shab - bat;

29

-vu v' - nu - hu b' - yom shab - bat.

The Man Who Brought Filler Syllables to Mainstream Worship: Pierre Pinchik (1899-1971)

Gleaned from many sources

Judaism's mystical stream had been reduced to a trickle until the Yiddish playwright Shin Ansky opened its floodgates with his dramatic legend, *The Dybbuk*, in 1920. Composer Joseph Rumshinsky, an eyewitness to its opening night performance reported:

The curtains parted on a semi-dark *Beis medrash*, illumined by a single candle. Broken sounds were heard, an unclear melody which moaned in ecstatic communing with God. It was made up of notes drawn from generations upon generations of Jews, very, very slowly, almost like an overture but without the orchestra.¹



That was the atmosphere in which Pierre Pinchik grew to young manhood, and which enabled him to pour the age-old Kabbalistic flame into new vessels. He went one step beyond Leib Glantz, who had confined the use of filler syllables—so much a part of Hasidic song—to *z'mirot* that are sung at home rituals like Kiddush, Havdalah and Birkat Ha-mazon, but not at synagogue worship. Pinchik transferred *ai-yai-yai* from the privacy of family dining rooms into the public domain of the community sanctuary. Before him, personal moans of “oy-vey” were heard only on Zavel Kwartin’s recordings, a form of idiosyncratic license taken during prayer by small-town *ba’alei t’fillah* in the smaller towns of Eastern Europe. Pinchik’s syllabic embellishments in Hasidic style went hand-in-glove with a whole panoply of dramatic gestures that he used at the prayer Amud to set the stage for each section of the liturgy.

While facing the congregation after a Torah scroll had been removed from the Ark and presented to him for the Sh’ma and processional to the reading desk, Pinchik would shield it from sight with his oversized tallit. When he carried it through the standing congregation he would wrap his tallit even tighter around the scroll—as if he were saving it from conflagration and

¹ Cited in Nahma Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars* (New York: Harper & Row), 1977: 219.

certain danger in the midst of a pogrom.² He was (perhaps subconsciously) imitating the Russian Jew in Marc Chagall's 1930 painting that now hangs in a Tel-Aviv Museum;³ if someone "threatened" to kiss it—he would swerve away! The tableau was both unforgettable and somewhat disturbing all at once—because of the inevitable associations it set up with recent historical events that many in his audience had lived through.

His suddenly interjected *parlando* passages occurred just as unexpectedly. Nowadays, when so much of the service is read aloud from pulpit and pew, the spoken word has lost its former impact during davening. Sixty years ago if a cantor spoke while chanting—people thought he'd lost his singing voice (Heaven forbid!). In fulfilling the Mitzvah of counting the Omer, when Pinchik turned the commandment into a question—by inflecting the word *k'dei* ("in order to") upward as if to say: "why?" and immediately gave the answer: *k'dei l'tahareinu* ("in order to purify us!") it caused a sensation.

But when he reached *Maoz tsur*—the 13th-century Hanukkah hymn—he turned extremely serious, as befits the vengeful third line of its opening stanza—

Leit takhin matbei'ah mi-tsar hamnabei'ah

When Thou preparest the slaughter for the blaspheming foe⁴—

even though it's been treated more benignly in more widely known translations ("Haste my restoration, let a ransomed nation, joyful sing to its King, psalms of dedication").⁵

2 The editor's personal recollection of a Shabbat morning service that Pinchik led at the Stone Avenue Talmud Torah, Brownsville section of Brooklyn, NY, Spring of 1957.

3 Beit HaT'futsot Museum in Tel-Aviv, *The Red Torah*.

4 *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, Nosson Scherman, ed. (Brooklyn, Ny: Mesorah Publications, Ltd.), 1987:283.

5 Solomon Solis Cohen, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book* (New York: Bloch Publishing Co.), 1959: 951.

Maoz tsur

Text: Mordechai, 13th century

Music: Pierre Pinchik
The Repertoire of Hazzan Pinchik,
Cantors Assembly, 1964

Allegretto

Allegretto

9

Ma - oz, ma - oz tsur y' - shu - a - ti, l' - kha na - eh, l' - kha na - eh l' - shab - bei - ah.

17

Tik - kon, tik - kon beit t' - fil - la - ti, v' - sham to - dah, v' - sham to - dah n' - zab - bei -

24

- aḥ, l' - cit_ ta-khin mat - bei - aḥ mi - tsar ham' - na - bei - aḥ,

29 **Poco piú mosso**

az eg - mor b' - shir miz - mor, az eg - mor_ b' - shir miz - mor; az eg - mor b' -

Poco piú mosso

34

shir miz - mor ḥa - nuk - kat ham - miz - bei - aḥ; az eg - mor b' - shir miz - mor,

39

az eg - mor_ b' - shir miz - mor, az eg - mor b' - shir miz - mor ḥa - nuk - kat ham - miz - bei

rit. *a tempo*

rit. *a tempo*

3

44

*rit.***Allegro moderato**

ah. Ra-ot sav - ah

50

naf - shi, b' - ya-gon ko - hi_ kil-lah; ra-ot sav - ah naf - shi, naf-shi, naf-shi, naf-shi, b' -

57

ya - gon. ko - hi_ kil - lah. Hay - yai, hai - yai

62

mei-r' ru b' - ko-shi; hai-yai hai-yai

67

mei-r'-ru b' - ko - shi b' - shib - bud

72 **Tempo 1°**

mal-khut eg - lah, u-v' - ya-do ha-g'-do - lah

Tempo 1°

77

ho - tsi et ha - s' - gul - lah,

80

heil par - oh v' - khol, v' - khol zar - o

83 *rit.* , **A tempo**
 Yor' - du k' - e - ven bim - tsu - lah. Ma - oz, ma - oz
A tempo

88
 tsur_____ y' - shu - a - ti, l' - kha na - eh, l' - kha na - eh l' - shab - bei -

93 *pp*
 -ah. Ai - yai, ai - yai, ai - ya -

97 *dim. rit.*
 ya - ya yai; ai - yai - yai, ai - yai - yai, ai - ya ya - ya - yai.

The Birth of a Cantorial Classic

By Mordechai Yardeini (1908-1982)

Early in 1930 after I had taken my first steps as a writer for the Philadelphia daily, *Yiddische Velt*, I decided to make a trip to *Erets yisrael*. Two years earlier I had visited Poland, Roumania, Italy, Belgium, France, Germany and England, and had returned feeling like a new man. I was convinced that no matter how diligently you studied, how many books you read, how many plays and concerts you attended, you could still improve your education by seeing new places with your own eyes. And I had been blessed with good eyes, good ears and a good memory, which I considered to be gifts that our Creator meant us to use.



It didn't take me very long to get my father's consent, but my mother—that was a different story altogether. I had to work on her for a whole week before I was able to get a "yes" from her, and for a good reason. Not even a year had elapsed since the bloody Arab riots had taken place against Jews in Palestine, so how could she let her *Mottele* go to a dangerous trouble spot like that? I persisted, however, until I wore down her resistance.

So, in the month of February 1930 I was aboard the S.S. Mauritania on my way to Palestine. The trip took 19 days, because the ship stopped at Gibraltar, Madeira, Algiers and Athens before it finally docked one bright morning at the port of Haifa.

There I was greeted by Yankel Melamed (Yankl Moyshe-Mordekhe's), a Sloveshner *lantsman* who worked for the Mizrahi Party in that city. What his duties were, I didn't know yet, only that he was a paid official of the party. When I had last seen him in Sloveshne he was an *apikores* who had previously been a pious Jew, but after the pogrom in our town a whole host of *apikorsim* had arisen. The opposite had also happened; some former *apikorsim* became very religious.

Didn't Chaim Lieberman, the former radical, become religious during the Hitler plague? He was no longer the Chaim Lieberman who wrote *Literary*

Silhouettes in which he sang the praises of Ernst Toller, Eugene O'Neill, George Brandes and other secular writers of that ilk.

So I found Yankel Melamed back in the religious fold, but at least he was back in the Mizrahi and not in the extreme Agudah movement of the Mei'ah Sh'arimniks. Not that I had any complaints against Yankl's turn-about; essentially he was the same warm, good-hearted fellow I had known back in Sloveshne. Not a whit different. So he didn't take off his hat when he brought me to his home on Mt. Carmel; that was his own private affair. Instead of talking politics, we reminisced about our Sloveshne *lantslayt* who were now in both America and Palestine. But he very strongly suggested that when I got to Tel Aviv I should find the police station and ask for Chaimke Rozman—Chaim Hershel the Ironmonger's—who was a member of the Tel Aviv police force!

I stayed in Haifa only one day, because my aim was to get to Tel Aviv as soon as possible. Who did I know there? Aside from Pesach Ginzburg who was the regular *Erets yisrael* correspondent for the New York *Morgen-zhurnal*, I didn't know a soul.

I also had a letter of introduction from Moyshe Katz, editor of the *Yiddishe velt*, to Golda Meir (in 1930 her name was still Meyerson) who was secretary of *Mo'etsset ha-po'alat* (Women Workers' Council). The letter asked her to be helpful to me in getting information for a series of articles I would be writing for Moyshe's newspaper. My chief interest, however, lay in music, theater and literature, not in politics or even in impressions of the land and its settlements.

Needless to say, I was amazed by Tel Aviv, which was one hundred percent Jewish in 1930, the model of an envisioned Jewish city. To me it resembled a beautiful garden with ultramodern homes sitting like a white dream on a stretch of sand, a garden that kept growing larger every day. It was difficult to believe that our people's hands had built it. Who dreamed it up? Who carried out the plans? The whiteness of the houses blinded the eyes no less than the big stars at night in the clear blue Tel Aviv sky; a city of eternal springtime.

And the idol of Tel Aviv, of the entire *yishuv*,¹ was the world famous and widely acclaimed national Hebrew-Yiddish poet Chaim Nachman Bialik, whom everyone honored and everyone revered. Was there a literary or artistic event in Tel Aviv in which Bialik did not participate and was not the main speaker? Everyone listened to what he had to say, and everyone adored him as Hasidim adore their rebbe.

He was *my* Bialik too! As a boy, when I began studying Hebrew and reached the page of the text where Bialik's first poem *El ha-tsippor* ("The Bird") was

1 Early 20th-century Jewish population of Palestine.

printed, I immediately *knew* the flavor of his word, his sound, his meaning, his melody. Yet, not until I studied “Hebrew Style” and the thick Hebrew Poetry anthologies did I get to learn about the real Bialik, the great Jewish bard, perhaps the greatest since the Spanish epoch of Ibn Gabirol, Ibn Ezra and Yehuda Halevi.

I heard Jeremiah weep not only in the Lamentations that Jews chant on Tishah B’Av, but in Bialik’s *B’ir ha-hareigah* (“In the City of Slaughter”)—a lamentation on the Kishinev pogrom of 1903. And what poetry there was in his “Winter Songs” or his “Songs of Fury” or “The Pond.” But it is not my intention to write a critique about his work. I want to tell about Bialik the man, the Jew from Volhynia, the happy and sympathetic human being.

Yes, Chaim Nachman Bialik was an ardent Jew. He could wax enthusiastic over a child, or after reading a good poem, or after hearing a concert or an old Hasidic song, or a bit of traditional cantorial music. He would often mention Shammai, the khazn of Zhitomir where his grandfather lived and where he would frequently go to visit. He loved to listen to the violin, just as he loved to daven in a simple, everyday Minḥah service in the Volhynian manner.

Once I heard him talking with publisher Yehoshua Ravnitzky and Bible scholar Dr. Yehezkel Kaufman about this:

Listen to this part of the Weekday *Sh’moneh-esreih* as I heard it in the shul in Zhitomir. In Odessa I never heard it sung that way because there, Pini Minkowsky ruled the roost—and he was trying to sound like Sulzer of Vienna!

I don’t like to listen to a cantor who sings the words mechanically. I like to hear a *kahzn’s* heart and soul. Like this young man here—I like the way he sings, and you know why? Because he’s a Volhynian! I remember his grandfather from Karastin and I knew his father before he married the girl from Sloveshne. Akh, Sloveshne, Karastin (the Jews called it “Iskarast”), Ushamir, Avrutch, Naraditch, Vlednik—what marvelous Jewish towns they were! Priceless!

Even their dust was like gold. Shall we ever see such juicy shtetlekh again?

Like the fresh rye bread that my poor mother used to bake. And the Vlednik Ohel² where she used to go every *Yom kippur katan*.³ Oh, the precious Jews who used to come there—men and women—from Odessa, from Kharkov, from Yekaterineslav, from Zhitomir; they used to come on

2 *Ohel*—structure over a *Tzaddik’s* tomb.

3 *Yom kippur katan*—“Minor day of Atonement,” on the last day of each Jewish month (*erev rosh ḥodesh*) pious Jews fast until noon.

a pilgrimage to the holy Tzaddik and put their *kvitlekh*⁴ in the Ohel. They would sleep outdoors in the courtyards, in the streets, because there was no inn in Vlednik, there was no place to put up so many people, all kinds of Jews—rich, poor, scholars and illiterates, merchants and wagon-drivers, all together, like one family, as though they were guests at the same wedding. And the weeping and wailing—enough to split the heavens! The *Ribono shel olam* must have been stronger than iron to withstand it!

Once Bialik started talking there was no stopping him. The only one who could do that was his gentle, quiet, soft-spoken Manya—Manishka he called her—who was the apple of his eye, even though she bore him no children—and his longing for a child was almost palpable. According to Jewish Law he could have divorced her after they were married ten years with no children. But Bialik would no longer have been the same. The greater his yearning for children the deeper his love and esteem for his Manishka. She watched over him as if he were her child, brought him all his meals on time, made sure he napped in the afternoon, did not let him overwork, kept people away from him when he was writing.

Bialik was not an observant Jew, but he was a great believer in traditional customs and holidays, even such minor fast days as the Tenth of Tevet, the Fast of Esther and the Fast of Gedaliah, let alone the Seventeenth of Tammuz or Tisha B'Av.

And who can ever forget the joy that enveloped his home, his little garden, his street, on *Simhat torah*! It seemed that all of Tel Aviv came to celebrate the holiday with Bialik. The neighborhood was filled with unending song and dance, the joy unrestrained. I would have sworn that the sandy hills overlooking Bialik's beautifully designed home sang along. It was a kind of folk-happiness that streamed out of warm hearts in honor of their great national poet. The whole city celebrated. No other person in the land merited such honor, such adoration. He was the heart of Tel Aviv, of the entire *yishuv*. All of *Erets yisrael* was filled with his spirit, with his presence. He was its uncrowned monarch.

Shirei bialik ("Poems by Bialik") was issued in one edition after another and grabbed up as soon as it appeared. Wherever there was a party or a celebration, it was the first item on the list to bring as a gift. Bialik was the "old sage" who sparkled with Jewish wit and wisdom, but he was recognized by non-Jews as well. Maxim Gorky was among his admirers. Through Bialik he heard the voice of Israel the Patriarch, the voice of the Bible, of the Talmud, of the Zohar—the demanding voice of generations of deep-rooted Jewish

4 *Kvitlekh*—folded notes asking for help of one kind or another.

life and history. Bialik was the “pillar of fire” that illumined the grayness of Jewish existence and ignited the Jewish spirit. His presence in *Erets yisrael* was, for the *yishuv*, a source of hope and courage, of struggle and continuity, dignity and respect. With his genius and his simplicity, with his love for his own people and their land, for their own toil and labor, with his pride in their achievements, in their daring resistance to the powerful, he influenced the entire *yishuv* and at the same time inspired their opposition to brutality, lawlessness and exploitation.

Bialik’s spirit was felt in every corner of the land, in Haifa and Jerusalem, in Safed and Tiberias; but in Tel Aviv he was the unchallenged king. Writers and artists listened to what Bialik had to say. Abba Ahi-Meir, editor of the Revisionist *Doar ha-yom*, rarely wrote a negative word about Bialik, because that meant provoking the ire of the *yishuv*. You could criticize the moon, the sun and the heavens, but not Bialik—that was a sacrilege...

It so happened that during the same week in which Bialik returned from a trip to Europe, I came to *Erets yisrael* for the second time within a year, having just left there four months earlier. And although I was still very young and only a beginner—both as a singer and as a writer—the press carried a notice of my expected arrival the following Tuesday. In Friday’s *Davar* and *Haaretz* there had appeared brief announcements of my second visit to *Erets yisrael*. For this I had to thank my friend Jacob Spigelman, a journalist for *Davar* and correspondent for the New York *Forverts*. After our meeting during my first visit, he and I had become rather close.

Naturally, when I arrived on Tuesday, he was among the first people I got in touch with, and it was he who had done me the favor of sending those notices to the papers. As a result, people knew I was there—which got me into an unexpected predicament.

The day after the notices appeared in both papers I was sitting at the Sabbath table of the Rozlers, on Geulah Street. I was there because of my acquaintance with a young woman I had met aboard ship—Mrs. Rozler’s sister. We were having a good time singing *z’mirot* when someone knocked at the door. The oldest son went to see who it was. When he opened the door, two distinguished-looking gentlemen stepped in. One of them I knew from my previous visit: Dr. Rosenstein, who owned a music store in Tel Aviv. The identity of the second one I learned after we all exchanged greetings of *Shabbat shalom*. He introduced himself to me as a member of *Hov’vei n’ginnah* (Music Lovers) of Tel Aviv, but unfortunately, I can no longer recall his name.

Mr. Rozler invited the two guests to have a seat, and after some small talk he inquired about the purpose of their visit.

“We went to the hotel where your young friend is staying,” began Dr. Rosenstein, “and they told us where he was. We represent the *Oneg shabbat* committee as well as the *Hov’vei n’ginnah*, and we are here to invite Mr. Sherman (I had not yet changed my name to Yardeini) to attend this afternoon’s *Oneg shabbat* and to sing for the guests—among whom will be our beloved poet Bialik.” Looking directly at me, he added: “You can sing whatever you choose to.”

The spoon I was holding almost fell out of my hand. My whole body began to shake. I was barely able to get the words out my mouth.

“What do you mean—sing for your guests? I’m not prepared. I can’t do it—if only I had known beforehand...”

“Mr. Sherman,” insisted the second representative, “they sent us here on a mission. You can’t turn us down. The *Oneg shabbat* and the *Hov’vei n’ginnah* will feel hurt if you don’t accept their invitation.”

And they both got up to leave.

“Shabbat shalom! Shabbat shalom!”

When they were at the door, Dr. Rosenstein turned and said, “Don’t forget, Mr. Sherman, come on time, and please don’t disappoint us!”

And they left. I sat there in a state of stupor. The others at the table watched me in silence. They were just as frightened as I was. It was no small matter—singing for the people at an *Oneg shabbat* in *Ohel shem*⁵—the “public” in *Erets yisrael* at that time consisted of the most idealistic Jews from all over Europe. They were extremely particular—especially in their choice of plays and concerts, books and lectures, newspapers and magazines. You could walk into the home of a poor *haluts* (pioneering farmer) or a laborer in Tel Aviv, Haifa or Jerusalem and find a bed made of planks or a table knocked together from boards, but on the floor you would see stacks of books piled to the ceiling. For who was he—this *haluts* or this laborer? Usually a former college or university student, or a *yeshiva bokhur* (seminarian), or at the very least a former *kheyder yingl* (boy who’d attended all-day Jewish religious school in Europe) with a good sharp head on him. And I can testify that these same laborers often skipped a few meals so they could buy a ticket for a concert to hear Jascha Heifetz or Mischa Elman or Emanuel Fuermann or

5 (“Shem’s Tent”), a hall on Balfour Street, founded by Bialik in 1930 to foster cultural Judaism).

Ossip Gabrilowitsch—or similar world-famous virtuosos who were visiting *Erets yisrael* for the first time.

Mr. Rozler finally broke the silence.

“What do you intend to do?”

“I haven’t the vaguest idea.”

“You’ve got to think of something,” my young lady friend said in English, although she knew both Yiddish and Hebrew well.

“You must do it, Mr. Sherman,” echoed the oldest Rozler boy. He himself played the violin in a theater orchestra. “If you don’t go to that *Oneg shabbat*, you’ll make a bad name here for yourself. They’ll call you a snob.”

“Yes, of course, I understand that,” I agreed. “But what shall I sing? I can’t come to Bialik’s *Oneg shabbat* and sing just anything. It has to be suitable for the occasion and in good taste!”

“It certainly does,” said Mr. Rozler.

“Do you have a prayerbook with the Sabbath *z’mirot*? Or a little Psalter?”

“Benjamin,” he said to his youngest son, “in the bookcase you’ll find a big *siddur* and *Seifer t’hillim*. Please give them to Mr. Sherman.”

I took the books into the next room and nervously began to turn the pages. At last my eye fell on Psalm 121—*Esa einai el he-harim* (“I lift my eyes unto the mountains, from where will my help come?”). Pacing back and forth, back and forth like a man demented, I tried to memorize the words and their meaning until suddenly a melody began to resound in my ears, a new melody that matched the words. As I went over it again and again, the melody became clearer and clearer, more defined, more logical. And when I felt I had the whole thing the way I wanted it, I began rehearsing it in my mind and in my heart, until every word and every note became part of me, and the combination of text and music sang out of me like a plant that naturally sprouts out of the earth.

When I came out of the room with an excited “*I’ve got it!*” everyone stared at me in amazement, as if I had just given birth to a baby.

“How pale you look!” exclaimed my lady friend.

“It’s nothing. I’m all right. I’m going back to my hotel to change.”

“Maybe you ought to rest here a while and have a cup of tea,” suggested Mrs. Rozler.

“No thank you, there’s no time!”

By four o'clock, when we started walking to the *Ohel shem*, we were joined by the playwright A. Ashman, who had once been my friend's Hebrew teacher in a town near Kamenetz-Podolsk in the Ukraine. The closer we came to the *Ohel shem*, the more crowded the thoroughfare became, until we could go no further. Outside the hall stood a mass of people—all pushing and shoving. The Jewish policeman didn't know how to handle the situation.

"How will I ever get inside?" I asked Ashman.

"It's bad! We'll never be able to get through."

Then a miracle happened. From a distance, the police captain recognized Ashman and came over to us. By dint of some strenuous elbowing he led us through the crowd and up to the door, but not before I felt as though I'd lost an arm and a leg.

The *Ohel shem* was packed to the rafters. The setting sun had shrouded the hall in darkness, except for the rays pushing in through the windows, as if they too had come to see Bialik. Somehow, we made our way up front to a table around which a group of people were seated close together like boys in a *kheyder*. Someone sat me down on the bench. When I looked up, I found that I was sitting directly opposite Bialik himself. He greeted me with a warm *shalom aleikhem!* To his left sat his publisher, Yehoshua Ravnitzky, and the Zionist leader, Dr. Ben-Zion Mosenson; to his right, the poets Jacob Fichman and David Shimonovitz. On the white tablecloth stood glass fruitbowls filled with the big golden Jaffa oranges that are so easy to peel, and sweet as sugar.

I felt as if I were sitting on hot coals. The chattering of the crowd was deafening, but suddenly the noise stopped—Bialik had stood up. Terror gripped me. I heard Bialik saying that before he reported on his trip to Europe he wanted to introduce a young guest from America, and then he spoke the words that, despite my confused state, burned themselves into my brain:

Friends! We have with us an honored guest—a guest from America. His name is *Shir*-man, and his name is his recommendation. Mr. *Shir*-man will now sing one of his songs!"

(He was, of course, making a pun on the Hebrew word *shir*, which means "song".)

The crowd applauded. Bialik asked me to stand up, but I couldn't; I was afraid my knees would buckle.

“I’d rather not,” I murmured. “It will be more informal if I sit...” To myself I said, “God in Heaven, how can I escape from here? Impossible! You’ve got to sing, Mord, there’s no way out!”

And the audience waited. I couldn’t open my mouth.

“Well, Mr. *Shir*-man—we’re waiting.”

Finally I took the risk—and began. How I ever finished, I still don’t know. But when I ended Psalm 121, the audience burst into applause that sounded like thunder in my ears. And despite the calls for an encore—and Bialik’s insistence—I couldn’t oblige them. Not out of coyness or obstinacy, but simply because I felt as if all the strength had been drained out of me. I couldn’t even open my mouth to say “thank you.”

And that’s the story of the birth of a song. But much more important is the fact that Chaim Nachman Bialik himself was the cause of it.

*Mordechai Yardeini (1908-1982) emigrated with his family to Palestine as a child, and to the United States in 1922, where he settled in Philadelphia. In 1930 he interrupted a budding acting career in Yiddish theater to continue his musical studies in Palestine. Returning to New York in 1936, he began writing regularly for the newspaper, **Der tog**, and in 1940 he entered the cantorate as officiant at High Holiday services and singer at concerts. At home in a wide repertoire of hazzanut and Yiddish song, he wrote articles on general and Jewish music for over 40 years. This chapter is reprinted from **Words and Music**, a posthumous selection from his essays, translated by Max Rosenfeld and published by the Yiddisher Kultur Farband in 1986.*

Esa einai

Text: Psalm 121

Music: Mordechai Yardeini
(1930)

Piano: Charles Heller

Adagio molto

4 *p* E - sa ei - nai el he - ha - rim_ mei - a - yin ya - vo ez - ri, _____

8 ez - ri mei - im a - do - nai o - seih sha - ma - yim, va - a - rets. _____

8^{bb}

12

Al yi-tein lam-mot rag-le- kha. al ya-num shom-re-

15

kha. Hin-neih lo ya-num v'-lo yi- shan_ sho-meir yis- ra- eil,

18

hin-neih_ lo ya- num_ v'-lo_ yi- shan sho-meir yis- ra - eil;

21

hin-neih lo ya-num v'- lo yi- shan, hin-neih lo ya-num v'-lo yi-

24

shan _____ sho-meir yis-ra-eil; _____

28

sho-meir yis-ra-eil, _____ hin-neih lo ya-num v'-lo yi shan, sho-meir yis-ra - eil...

32

A-do-nai shom-re - kha, _____

36

a - do - nai _____ tsil-kha _____ al yad y'-mi-ne - kha, _____

39

al yad y - mi - ne - kha;

ppp

41

al yad y' - mi - ne - kha.

pp *ppp* **Adagio molto**

Adagio molto *p*

45

piu lento

Yo - mam ha - she - mesh lo yak - kek - ka,

ppp

48

v' - ya - rei - ah bal - lai - lah; v' - ya - rei - ah bal - lai - lah.

pp *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

51

A - do - nai

ppp

54

mf

yish-mor-kha mik-kol ra

f

yish-mor-kha mik-kol ra;

57

pp

yish-mor et naf-she - kha.

60

A - do - nai yish - mor tseit - kha,

63 *p* yish-mor tseit-kha; tseit-kha u-vo-e - kha, *p* tseit - khah *p* 7

66 *pp* 3 **Adagio molto** u - vo - e - kha, tseit-kha u - vo - e - kha, *ppp rit.*

69 mei - at - tah v' - ad - o - lam; mei - at -

71 *ff* tah v' - ad o - lam. *fff* *sfz*

Darkness at Noon

Moshe Koussevitzky (1899-1966) in Vilna, Warsaw and Russia

By Akiva Zimmermann

Vilna

During the First World War, Vilna had served as a battleground for the Russian and German armies, belonging to one side or the other according to who was victorious on any given day. Early in 1918, with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and Germany's impending defeat by the Allies, Lithuania declared its independence, with Vilna as its capitol. Bolshevik elements still controlled areas of the country and set up Revolutionary authorities. In July of 1920 a peace accord was signed in Moscow, whereby the Soviet Union recognized an independent Lithuania and its new capitol of Vilna. Russia also assumed the obligation of assisting in the return of Lithuanian war refugees to their homeland. Among those returnees was the Koussevitzky family.



Despite the Russo-Lithuanian agreement, Polish general Lucian Żeligowski captured Vilna and its suburbs—including the Koussevitzkys' home town of Smorgon—and annexed the entire area of 32,250 square kilometers as Polish territory. Relations between Lithuania and Poland were ruptured, and the border between them would remain sealed until 1939. The Lithuanian government fled to Kovno, which became the capitol in exile. Inevitably, the change of regime affected Jewish citizens who were forced to swear allegiance accordingly.

The Koussevitzky family reached Vilna in the Fall of 1921. In a series of memoirs that he later published in the cantorial periodical *Die khazonim velt* (Warsaw 1933-1934) entitled "From My Recent Past," Moshe Koussevitzky tells of his path to the position of Chief Cantor at the Great Synagogue of Vilna. That grand edifice, built as much below ground as above it due to lo-

cal restrictions against exceeding the height of nearby churches, dated from 1573 and was the pride of Vilna's Jewish community.

Grey and overcast were the days following WW I. We had hoped to rest a bit in "the Jerusalem of Lithuania" after all we'd gone through. We arrived with nothing, not a penny in our pockets. Luckily, we found a place to stay: the house of our cousin, whose husband Shmuel Shzurer taught at the Torat Emet School. Meanwhile, our grandfather, Sholom Shulman, passed away and his death only deepened the dejection in which the family found itself. At one of the family gatherings *Neḥamah*, Shmuel's daughter, sang. She was a popular folk singer, acclaimed for her rendition of Rav Levi Yitzḥok Berdichever's *Kaddish*. When she performed it for us we were all moved to tears. Still under its spell, I was inspired to sing Zavel Kwartin's recitative, *Tsur yisrael*. [As a child, Moshe had spent hours on end in the Shzurers' home, glued to the phonograph, listening to recordings by Kwartin and Rosenblatt.]

When I finished the piece, Shmuel turned to his daughter and asked if she would take me along with her to choir rehearsals at the Culture League.

I accompanied *Neḥamah* to a rehearsal and the conductor, Avraham Slep (1884-1942), asked me to sing something. Remembering the "success" I'd enjoyed with Kwartin's *Tsur Yisroel*, I decided to sing another piece of his: *Y'hal'lu* from the Torah service.

I sang it with a clear tone and marvelous coloratura; after the harrowing war years I was amazed at my ability to produce such ringing sounds. The room burst into applause and everyone wanted to shake my hand. The conductor rapped on his music stand and declared: "Moshe, you're going to remain with us as our hazzan." His words penetrated my innermost being. From that moment I devoted any free time I could scrape together in the evenings to practice singing at the Culture League. Through rain, wind, snow and storm I would run there, often forgetting to return home at a reasonable hour, to the annoyance of my family. My days were reserved for study at the well known Ramelis Yeshiva.

Moshe noted that the Culture League choir included among its members some very talented professional singers. Among them was the excellent bass, Shlomo Scharf, who had returned with the other Lithuanian refugees from Russia and now sang in the choir of *Tohoras hakkodesh* Synagogue. (This would be the only synagogue to remain standing after the Shoah of WW II, and it still functions to this day.) *Tohoras hakkodesh* synagogue was for Maskilim, Vilna's intelligentsia. Its rabbi was the Zionist leader Shmaryahu Levine (1867-1935) and its Shammash was the accomplished poet, David Fogel (1866-1944). Its hazzan was Avraham Moshe Bernstein (1866-1932),

who had composed numerous prayer settings, including *Adonai adonai*, as well as Hebrew and Yiddish songs.

“You cannot imagine how lucky I felt,” says Moshe Koussevitzky, “when the bass Scharf suggested I join the *Tohoras hakkodesh* choir as first tenor on a paying basis, and that’s exactly what I did.”

The next day I met Hazzan Bernstein at the synagogue. He auditioned me and liked what he heard. My first services were for Shavuot, 1923. My youngest brother David, who was then twelve years old, joined the boy *m’shor’rim* and quickly rose to the rank of first alto. It was quite an experience to sing in that choir, nor will I ever forget the Yom Tov davening of Avraham Moshe Bernstein. Above all, the way he executed his own *Adonoi adonoi* stands out in my memory. This was to be his final year at *Tohoras hakkodesh*; after Simhat Torah he took leave of us with a heavy heart.

Koussevitzky describes with what genuine love on all sides Bernstein retired from the post he had filled for over 30 years and where he had spent the very best of his creative energy. After *Yamim nora’im* the synagogue officials invited qualified candidates to apply for the now open position of hazzan at *Tohoras hakkodesh*. Many did so and were given Sabbaths at which to audition. Week after week they gave forth their best, but none of them satisfied the *m’vinim* of Vilna. Finally, one candidate did capture their hearts: Eliyahu Zaludkovsky from Rostov. After a second hearing he was offered the position. Not only was he a good davener, but a learned Jew, and general rejoicing greeted his appointment. As in Rostov, he gave willingly of his hazzanic skill and knowledge of modern musical technique. He augmented the choir and engaged a new music director: Leib Zeitlin (1884-1930). After Zeitlin emigrated to America, Zaludkovsky hired the young conductor, Hanan Glazer (1902-1942).

Zaludkovsky also presided over Moshe’s marriage to Raya Zrankin, after which the newlyweds settled into an apartment on Dominican Street, near Gaon of Vilna Street, in the Jewish Quarter. Moshe was deeply influenced by Hazzan Zaludkovsky’s facile handling of the *nusah ha-t’fillah*. He was therefore saddened when Zaludkovsky left Vilna in 1925; he was losing a friend as well as a teacher. Again began the search for a successor, with a different outcome this time, as Moshe relates.

The choir’s director, Hanan Glazer, loved me like a brother and occasionally let me sing the line marked for “Cantor” in certain compositions. One Shabbat, the tenor singing solo in Abraham Dunajewsky’s *Mimkom’kha* suddenly got lost, and Glazer signaled me to take over. I wasn’t prepared but managed to do an exceptional job. After that, worshipers began to ask that I be allowed to stand as hazzan before the Ark. Surprisingly,

the *gabba'im* acceded to their request. Unfortunately, when I began to daven, my fellow tenors—out of jealousy—refused to cooperate with the conductor, an action that threw off the entire choral balance. Thus my baptism under fire as an independent hazzan on the Shabbat of *B'har*, 1925, was accompanied by a children's choir alone. I scraped through without mishap, and then began the pressure from congregants to appoint me Chief Cantor of *Tohoras hakkodesh* Synagogue.

My opposition consisted of one individual, the head gabbai, Shaul Rozental. "It cannot be," he said, "that a *m'shoreir* from the choir should be appointed hazzan in our shul!"

And so began yet another round of auditions during which popular demand forced Rozental to assign me another Shabbat service. I sang *Av ha-raḥamim hu y'raheim am amusim*, and when circling the synagogue with the Torah Scroll I could feel the worshipers' excitement. Among my supporters was a member with musical understanding, a good-hearted fellow named Isaac Luft who rallied the group that wanted me. One of those opposed told him "All you efforts are for naught. Shaul Rozental doesn't agree, and Moshe Koussevitzky will not get the job." Luft told him, "And I say that Moshe Koussevitzky will be the next *Shtot-khazn* (City Cantor) of Vilna!" Isaac was determined that I become better known in the many other synagogues of Vilna, and he arranged for me to officiate in a different one every Shabbat. I was in luck; renovation of the *Tohoras hakkodesh* building allowed Glazer and the choir to accompany me on all of these guest appearances.

Months passed until one day Isaac Luft came running with news that he'd arranged for me to daven a Shabbat in the third most important Vilna synagogue, *Zavels Kloyz*. I was to meet immediately with its head gabbai, Isaac Trotsky. Luft had not only prepared the way; he went with me, greeting Trotsky with "*Shabbat shalom*." That worthy replied "Nu, so this is the *khazn* you've been telling me about? Let him go before the Ark and we'll see what he sounds like. He looks presentable, but does he have what it takes at the *amud*? He should know, by the way, that he won't be receiving money for his davening."

Not paying a hazzan for his audition service was a custom that had become "law" in Vilna. All the synagogues—including the Great Synagogue—exploited hazzanim this way. Each one conducted a "March of the Candidates" that dragged on for months, during the course of which the congregation along with roaming bands of non-member hazzanut-lovers enjoyed the finest davening, gratis, without even having to pay the candidates' travel expenses!

Moshe approached the ordeal with fear and trembling, perhaps because he'd just learned that Gabbai Trotsky had invited him to officiate on the *Ya-*

mim nora'im while overlooking the fact that he'd already agreed to audition another hazzan—Mendel Zupovitch—over those same holy days! When Trotsky finally remembered, the only alternative was to promise Moshe that *he'd* be auditioning for Sukkot. More important, that same week Moshe was summoned to the offices of the synagogue where its treasurer partially pre-paid him for his upcoming service. The fee, equivalent to five dollars in today's currency, was considered a large sum in those days, especially to Moshe who was by then the father of an infant daughter, Sophia (1925-1952). His financial status was rather shaky; any money he earned was of great importance to the growing family.

The renovations at *Tohoras hakkodesh* had been completed and Borukh Kaminsky had won the contest for Chief Cantor. To accommodate his baritone voice the choral music had to be re-arranged. Rehearsals were held every evening from six to ten. Hanan Glazer remained as director, but rumors circulated that the choir would be disbanded right after the High Holidays. This worried Moshe tremendously, since his livelihood depended entirely on his salary as a chorister. Glazer and two singers—the bass Barishnik and the tenor Dushansky—were sent as delegates to Shaul Rozental to ascertain whether the rumor had any truth to it. Rozental vehemently denied it and as proof told them that every singer would receive payment in advance for his service, but he refused to put that stipulation in a binding contract.

When the advance payments to choristers had been made, Moshe discovered that what he'd received didn't tally with his own figures; he was short money. He asked Hanan Glazer for an explanation and was told that Shaul Rozental ordered the reduction because of the Sabbaths he had officiated in other synagogues with the choir. This upset Moshe greatly. He confronted Rozental who curtly rebuffed him: "We'll talk after the holidays." "But I need the money now," explained Moshe, "to buy food for my wife and child." Rozental's reply was, "Anyone who doesn't like the arrangement is free to leave!"

It was then that Moshe decided to take charge of his own destiny. He gave Hanan Glazer notice beforehand that he would not be singing over the High Holidays. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah he and his father went to daven at Vilna's Philharmonic Hall which had been rented for supplementary High Holiday services led by Hazzan Avraham Moshe Bernstein, an earlier victim of Shaul Rozental's high-handed stewardship of *Tohoras hakkodesh*. The hall was packed with fans of Bernstein's. As he rose for the hazzan's Call to Prayer—*Bar'khu*—Moshe folded his hands behind his back. Suddenly he felt someone tugging at them. He turned and recognized a boy from the *Tohoras hakkodesh* choir, panting and pulling at him with one hand. In the other hand

the lad held a sum of money that turned out to be exactly the amount that had been deducted from his compensation. Following the boy outside, Moshe was told that the lead tenor Dushansky hadn't shown up, that worshipers wouldn't let the service begin without the choir, and that a riot was about to break out. The junior *gabba'im*—over Rozental's objections—had quickly “arranged” to pacify the other renegade singer—Moshe—by sending him the money he'd been shorted, via Alto Express.

And who was the fast-running alto they'd entrusted with this mission of mercy? Moshe's youngest brother, David. After exchanging a knowing glance with his father, Moshe told David that he wouldn't touch this money nor would he return to *Tohoras hakkodesh*. The next day he and Dushansky went to pray at the Great Synagogue of Vilna where Hazzan Aharon Helfand (1897-1965) officiated, secretly hoping they might be recognized and called upon to sing with the choir. It quickly became clear that Rozental had issued a “ban” against them to the *gabba'im* of every synagogue in Vilna, including the Head Gabbai of the Great Synagogue. Instead of singing, they listened to Helfand's sweet voice, difficult as it was for both of them to remain passive after years of active involvement with High Holiday services.

The Ten days of Penitence passed by. On the day of Yom Kippur Moshe returned to hear Helfand, and for Neilah he walked back to Philharmonic Hall and heard Bernstein. There, his “guardian angel” Isaac Luft cheered him with the reminder that Sukkot was only five days off. The next morning Yitzhak Trotsky sent a messenger summoning him to a hurried meeting. “Young man,” he said, “now that we've shown good faith by giving you a down-payment towards Sukkos, how much will the whole business cost us?” Moshe steeled himself and asked, “Do you want me to bring a choir?” “Of course,” returned Trotsky, “but a small one.”

“In that case, figure on \$120.”

“Why \$120, and not \$100?”

“That's the price.”

“Come back tomorrow and I'll have a final answer for you.”

The next day Moshe received a positive reply from Trotsky. It was two days before the Festival, and with Dushansky's help he assembled a small choir that same day. The services went extremely well, and on Simhat Torah he was asked to officiate on *Shabbat b'reishit* as well, when the new month of Heshvan would be blessed. That Tuesday he received two other pieces of good news. A contract arrived that made him yearly hazzan of *Zavels Kloyz* Synagogue, and he would have a permanent choir under the leadership of

conductor/composer/cantor Akiva Durmashkin: a full-time position at last! That year turned out to be a real learning experience; he and the choir created new works regularly, and Moshe became one of the city's most sought-after hazzanim. Along with Aharon Gelfand of the Great Synagogue and Jacob Goldstein (1897-1961) of *Tohoras hakkodesh* he was considered one of Vilna's reigning triumvirate. Week after week, Yitzhak Trotsky would request that he give specific prayers special treatment, and he'd offer a detailed critique on them afterwards. Moshe accepted this well-meant advice in the same spirit it was offered, and he benefited greatly from it.

Not only did the hazzanim of Vilna move frequently within the city, they moved just as frequently to other cities. Having made their reputations in Vilna, they went on to earn their livings elsewhere. Gershon Sirota (1874-1943) and Mordechai Hershman (1888-1940), for example, left the Great Synagogue after fairly short stays of eight and seven years each. So did Aharon Helfand, who moved on to the Tlomackie Synagogue in Warsaw (as had Sirota almost two decades before), leaving the Great Synagogue position open once again. Officials there began seriously to consider young Moshe Koussevitzky, the same ones who less than a year earlier had refused to let him sing with the choir. Now he was so highly regarded in Vilna that they had no choice but to seek him for the chief cantorial post.

It was an exceptional achievement for Moshe; this was, after all, a position that had been held by world-class hazzanim. Besides Sirota and Hershman there were David Moshe Steinberg (1871-1941) and David Roitman (1884-1943). Nor had Moshe trod an easy path to this throne. Although the masses loved his singing, those in charge argued that he lacked the requisite *gravitas* for the job. A groundswell of popular demand led to his being granted a trial Shabbat; after that even his sworn enemies turned into admirers.

Avraham Keren, from the National History Archive at the University of Haifa, chronicles an episode connected with Moshe's appointment as *Shtot khazn* of Vilna. In his essay, "Shoemaker and Tailor in Jewish and Polish Proverbs" (*Anthology of Research into Jewish Folklore*, vols. 13-14, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), Keren states that after he'd won over the populace, Moshe Koussevitzky was ordered to appear before the head of the Jewish community. That individual wanted to invalidate his appointment because he came from a family of tailors in Smorgon—a town of laborers!

Professor Ben-Tsiyon Dinur (1884-1973) mentions in his posthumous *Jerusalem of Lithuania* (New York: Eliezer Ron, 1974):

Thousands of people attended services at the great Synagogue of Vilna every Shabbat. Only a few, perhaps ten percent, stood wrapped in prayer shawls and actually prayed. The rest had finished davening long before and had even recited the Shabbat Kiddush [followed by a repast]. Only afterwards did they go to hear the singing of Sirota, of Roitman or of the other famous hazzanim who were privileged to officiate in the *Shtot-shul*. Vilna understood the art of hazzanut, knew how to honor hazzanim and also how to choose them. Serving the Great Synagogue of Vilna was an important step for many renowned hazzanim to rise in the world of Jewish religious music.

Moshe Koussevitzky's short tenure there proved no exception; crowds of worshipers overflowed the Great Synagogue every time he davened with the choir, under Akiva Durmashkin's musical leadership. Moshe's brother Simcha had joined the choir's tenor section. His brother Jacob was already on his own as a cantor in Kremnitz. Young David, still an alto, had moved with Moshe from *Tohoras hakkodesh*. Musically gifted, he would lead the choir himself when Moshe didn't officiate. On those occasions Choir Director Durmashkin, who also served as Hazzan Sheini, relied on David to fill in for him as choirmaster.

Moshe's reputation now spread throughout Europe. He was invited to daven and concertize—for handsome remuneration—in Grodno, Bialystok and other cities in Galicia. Only in Vilna could the *m'vinim* boast (tongue in cheek) that they were fulfilling the verse from S'lihot:

Hinam ba'im eilekha ... lishmo'a el ha-rinah v'-el ha-t'fillah

“freely do they come before You... [enabling us] to hear song and prayer.”

Moshe, all the wiser for his recent experience, knew inwardly that the time had come for him to seek a position outside of Vilna. He applied to the new *Shomrei ha-dat* Synagogue in Antwerp, and when Aharon Helfand left the Tlomackie in Warsaw for London, Moshe decided to apply there as well. At least 200 other hazzanim evidently had come to the same decision, but this time Moshe's star shone brightly and he prevailed over all of them. In 1928 the Koussevitzky family, which now included Alexander, who was born the year before, moved to Warsaw. Moshe would still return to Vilna periodically for concerts and to guest-officiate at various synagogues. He'd left an indelible mark on hazzanut there. Raphael Chasman, editor of the Vilna periodical *Di yiddische shtimme*, cites Kipras Petrouskas, a leading tenor of the Lithuanian Opera: “From Moshe Koussevitzky's vocal endowment one could produce five more superlative tenors.”

Warsaw

The year 1938 marked Moshe's tenth anniversary at the Tlomackie. During that decade he had matured into the Jewish world's most acclaimed hazzan, and in recognition of his service, his synagogue's *gabba'im* assumed a calculated risk in allowing him to embark on a tour of the United States. They remembered only too well how Sirota came, saw, and was conquered by the lure of American Jewry's willingness to pay royally for the privilege of hearing Europe's finest hazzanim at the *Amud*. Their former cantor had left them high and dry even during the High Holiday season, a practice that eventually led to his departure. The *gabba'im* knew there was no legitimate reason to prevent Moshe from touring abroad. They therefore put his trip in the form of a Tenth Anniversary gift: two months—February and March—for him to concertize and officiate wherever he pleased, on condition that he return in time to officiate at Pesah services in Warsaw. During his absence, his *Hazzan Sheini*—Pinchas Sherman (1887-1943), who chaired the Cantors Society of Poland—would officiate with the choir.

In February of 1938 Moshe and Raya departed for London, where they visited with his three brothers and his widowed mother, Alta. Brother Simcha was at Dukes Place Synagogue, Jacob at Dalston and David at Hendon. Moshe and Raya sailed on the *Queen Mary* from London to New York, where tour manager Jacob Wallach met them at the pier along with a delegation of hazzanim that included Joshua Weisser (1882-1952), David Roitman, several representatives of the *Khazonim Farband* (Jewish Ministers Cantors Association of America), David Moshe Steinberg and choir director Meyer Machtenberg (1884-1979). They accompanied the Koussevitzkys to the Astor Hotel, which quickly became a mecca for cantors, journalists, public figures and artists to come and pay homage. On February 14th, an official welcoming dinner was held at the hotel. The 400 attendees were addressed by *Khazonim Farband* President Ben-Zion Kapov-Kagan (1899-1953), Leib Glantz (1898-1964), and Jacob Breitman (1895-n.d.). Moshe spoke about the status of *khazonus* and *yiddishkeit* in Poland. Newspapers reported that his tone of voice and appearance turned deadly serious as he described the distressing current situation, and advised his colleagues to prepare for Aliyah to the Land of Israel. The evening concluded with his singing of Israel Schorr's *She-yibaneh beit ha-mikdash*, with everyone joining as an *al fresco* choir in the refrain led by Jacob Rapaport (1890-1943), and accompanied at the piano by Meyer Machtenberg.

Artists from the Yiddish theater also welcomed him at a gathering where Joseph Rumshinsky, Jacob Kalich and Maurice Schwartz performed scenes from their respective repertoires.

Mordechai Hershman and his family hosted the Koussevitzkys in their Brooklyn apartment and then took their guests on a walking tour of the vibrant Modern Orthodox Jewish life in Borough Park. Feeling right at home, Moshe confided to Hershman—his long-time idol—his secret wish for the future: to live in *Erets yisrael*, to officiate for *Yamim nora'im* in the United States, and from the proceeds to visit wherever he liked. That way he wouldn't be davening for financial reward but in order to worship the One Who Chooses Songs of Praise—*Ha-boheir b'shinei zimrah*.

Carnegie Hall was filled to the rafters for Moshe's concert. Accompanied by pianist Nikolas Zaslavsky. He was billed as:

**“Yiddish-Polish Tenor—Primo Cantor,
Tlomackie Synagogue, Warsaw.”**

The program consisted of Hebrew prayers, Yiddish songs and operatic arias. Part One included Leo Low's *Mah gadlu*, Israel Schorr's *Hateih elohai ozn'kha* Joshua Weisser's *Der alter khazn*, Mozart's *Halleluyah* and Verdi's *Celeste Aida*. Part Two included Verdi's *Questa o Quella*, Israel Alter's *Ribono shel olam* and *Akavya ben mahalaleil omeir*, Josef Rosenblatt's *Ad heinah*, and Israel Schorr's *She-yibaneh beit ha-mikdash*.

The universally high praise that followed his Carnegie Hall concert provided a perfect curtain raiser for Moshe's American tour. Interestingly, the Polish tenor Jan Kiepora had made his Metropolitan opera debut that same evening. He was one of Moshe's greatest admirers in Warsaw and often came to the Tlomackie Synagogue to hear him. Now he had a chance to hear Moshe again, at the *Rumeynishe shul* on Rivington Street in Manhattan's Lower East Side, the New York synagogue where every famous visiting or resident hazzan had officiated over the years. It was *Shabbat m'vorkhim ha-hodesh adar sheini*, February 25-26, 1938, with Meyer Machtenberg conducting the choir. After the service, as anticipated, Moshe was immediately offered a yearly contract with irresistible salary and benefits—but he never wavered from his promise to return to Warsaw for Pesah. For the better part of two months he took America by storm on both *bimah* and concert stage. The press reaction was phenomenal. Before departing, he officiated in New York twice more: in New Lots, Brooklyn and on *Shabbat rosh hodesh nisan* in Congregation *Anshei slonim* on Norfolk Street on the Lower East Side, where his *Atah yatsarta*

prayer carried people to the peak of religious fervor at the words *horvah ireinu...* “desolate our City, ruined our Temple.”

He and Raya sailed back to Europe on April 5th. Just before embarkation they took leave of family members who lived in the U.S., and of the prominent hazzanim who had come to see them off. Back in Warsaw, adorned in praise, his Pesah davening was accompanied by the choir under David Ayzenstadt (1889-1942), his close friend from childhood and musical collaborator at Tlomackie from the beginning. He declined to act upon a suggestion by his old friend from Vilna—Hazzan Nathan Stolnitz, now living in Toronto—that he plan a similar tour of Canada in the near future. Not until 1947 would Moshe return to the United States, and a year later he would finally get to Canada.

When Moshe began rehearsing with the choir for *Yamim nora'im* of 1938 he had no inkling that it would be his last High Holiday services in the Tlomackie Synagogue’s sanctuary. The Polish Army Commander Rydz Shmigly swaggered before the world, confident that the non-aggression treaty his country had signed with Nazi Germany in 1934 still held, as did the mutual aid pacts with England and France. On December 12, 1938, a Central Synagogue for Jewish Soldiers in the Polish Army was inaugurated. Leaders of the Army appeared at its dedication alongside Cantors Moshe Koussevitzky and Joshua Lichterman. Moshe’s rabbi, Professor of Semitics Moshe Schorr (1874-1941), delivered a Benediction, and Chief Army Chaplain Rabbi Borukh Steinberg led the Dedication ceremony. Composer Leon Weiner, who accompanied at the organ, was appointed Musical Director of the synagogue. All of this would shortly become a moot point. The Polish Army would be crushed by the German Wehrmacht within weeks, and a few months later, Chaplain Steinberg would be among Polish officers executed by Soviet forces in the Katyn Forest.

During that final year before World War II broke out, Moshe Koussevitzky was invited to officiate in various Polish cities. In January of 1939 and again in March, he and his pianist daughter, Sophia, traveled to London for benefit concerts on behalf of refugee children in Zbunshin, a border town between Poland and Germany. Thousands of Polish Jews living in Germany had been forcefully expatriated there, and the Polish government refused to renew their passports. There the Jewish families remained, without worldly goods, a roof over their heads or official status. The Joint Distribution Committee sent food, and Moshe was asked to help raise money. Shortly thereafter, he led his final pre-War service as a guest-hazzan, in Bialystok.

In Warsaw, collections were taken to strengthen the Polish Army and Air Force. Moshe and the Tlomackie choir led by David Ayzenstadt were recruited in this effort. In Philharmonic Hall they gave a benefit concert to fortify the

city, and establish a Civil Defense in the event of air raids. The hall was filled to capacity and people were unreservedly appreciative of the music. Dr. Felicjan Slawoj-Skladkowski, Prime Minister of the Second Polish Republic, greeted the audience and—uncharacteristically—thanked the Jewish population for its contributions to the state. When Poland fell, he fled to Vilna, where he would remain for the next seven years.

In her book, *When the Curtain Fell* (1987), Lilly Goldenberg—daughter of the Tlomackie’s secretary, David Pulman—tells of the last days before hostilities officially erupted, and of the prayer services in the bombed synagogue. At summer’s end, as her father sat in his office finalizing seating arrangements for members, Cantor Koussevitzky and Choir Director Ayzenshtadt held rehearsals in preparation for *Yamim nora'im*. One morning a siren sounded, the ceiling shook and everyone ran down to the basement under the Library of the National Jewish Institute that adjoined the synagogue building. Warsaw was being bombed, and the radio announced that German troops were advancing deep into Polish territory. Parliament had met and its members declared, “Poland would fight on to victory...” The men of the congregation helped reinforce the building, and women enlisted to administer First Aid. It was the eve of Rosh Hashanah. The explosions grew more frequent and powerful. Lilly Goldenberg would later write:

The sight that I witnessed last night I don’t believe could have occurred even during the Spanish Inquisition. In the basements of the Hebrew Library which served as a shelter for us, by the light of a single menorah stood hundreds of people crowded together. By the prayer stand stood the hazzan dressed in a black coat instead of the white kitl he normally wore on Rosh Hashanah. The prayers were recited in a depressingly low voice. In a corner, women wailed openly. When the blessing “Who has kept us alive, sustained us and enabled us to reach this season” was said, I thought: what significance does it have in these circumstances?... [On Yom Kippur] the images of subterranean services recurred along with the awful crying out for mercy. All at once the lights went out and a bombardment began that continued non-stop all night.

Thus passed the High Holidays of 1939—in basements. Hunger was pervasive. No roundups as yet, no ghetto, but signs of an impending catastrophe everywhere. Moshe Koussevitzky tells of his last service in Warsaw.

It was on *Shabbat b'reishit*, October 7, 1939, still held in the basement. One of the choir boys, Yitzhak Eisner, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. He blessed the coming month of Heshvan for good. But the “good” was far away, and no one knew what would happen in the next hour, let alone the next month... Among those attending was a Gestapo officer. After the

davening he approached me and I thought: this is the end. To my surprise he said, *Giben zie mir das Telefon Buch* (“give me the telephone book”). After flipping through its pages and jotting down several numbers he said, *Herr Oberkantor, trinken zie nichts kaltes wasser* (Mr. Chief Cantor, do not drink cold water”).

If nothing else, that brief encounter convinced Moshe to try and escape from Warsaw, come what may. With God’s help he managed to get to Bialystok, which had been captured by the Russians early on. From there, he and the family were taken into the Soviet Union where they would remain for the duration of the war. He had tried to convince David Ayzenstadt to flee with him, to no avail. Ayzenstadt, his wife, and daughter Miriam who was called the “Singer of the Ghetto,” died in the Shoah. So, too, did almost the entire Tlomackie choir; among the few who survived was the Bar-Mitzvah boy of that final Shabbat service, Jack Eisner, who lives in the United States.

Russia

The war burst upon Poland like thunder on a clear day. Thousands of refugees met their death on the roads leading out of Warsaw. Lines of communication were severed and rumors spread concerning the fate of those who had fled. From the newspaper *Haboker* of December 14, 1939:

Koussevitzky’s Voice

Returnees from Poland report that the famous Hazzan Koussevitzky has escaped from Warsaw and attempted to cross over the border into Russian-occupied territory. He was captured, Nazi border guards stripped him naked and left him with nothing. After much suffering he managed to cross the border, find clothing in a nearby town and head for Bialystok. At a railway station he came upon a group of Soviet officers, who invited him to join them in a drink. The great hazzan, wrapped in rags, agreed to sing for them. When he began a familiar operatic aria they marveled that here before them stood an unforgettable artist. Koussevitzky asked if they would permit him to bring his family and belongings from Warsaw to Bialystok. The Russians—whose Foreign Minister Molotov had just signed a pact with his German counterpart, Von Ribbentrop—gave him a *laisse-passer* letter to the Nazi occupying forces, requesting that they assist the bearer in any way they can. And thus did Koussevitzky’s mighty voice save his family and his property from the Nazi inferno.

The reporter added a disclaimer: “This story, while moving, may not stand up under close scrutiny in all its details.” Sure enough, on December 31, 1939 the front page of *Hatsofeh* carried a follow-up item:

The mother of Hazzan Moshe Koussevitzky of Warsaw, who resides in London, received word from her son that he is alive and well. He escaped from Poland to Bucharest, Roumania.

This story was equally incorrect, since Moshe had fled not to Bucharest but to Bialystok. In “Moshe Koussevitzky, A Reminiscence” (*Die Presse*, Buenos Aires, July 26, 1958), Yitzhok Yanusevitz writes about a concert of Moshe’s in Bialystok, given shortly after his escape. There wasn’t an empty seat or even room to stand in the concert hall, so people stood outside. Koussevitzky sang a full and varied program, plus encores. Several voices from the audience called out loudly for “*Kol Nidre*” and other Jewish pieces. Moshe could not comply because the authorities forbade it, yet the atmosphere that night was reminiscent of Yom Kippur Eve at the time of the Inquisition. The writer Yosef Shimon Goldstein, known as “the happy pessimist,” verifies that the Russians prohibited Koussevitzky from singing cantorial prayers, but asserts that Moshe sneaked the song *Dos yiddishe lied*—words by Anshel Schorr (including prayer snippets), music by Sholom Secunda—into his programs.

It came about because Lithuania was still independent and unoccupied, and could be used as a roundabout route to the Russian capitol—a cultural hub where Moshe might be able to do some good for the war effort. He traveled to Vilna, from where it took him several weeks to reach Moscow. There, concert selections were immediately organized for him—on condition that he sing no cantorials. Ephraim Auerbach, the official in charge of these concerts, was himself a lover of hazzanut and a fan of Koussevitzky’s. Together they devised a clever ruse. Whenever Moshe was about to recite a prayer, he’d introduce it in Russian: “I come from Fascist Poland where they used to sing this way,” and he’d then demonstrate by chanting a prayer or a Psalm. After the “demonstration” he would add: “Now I’ve been lucky enough to reach free Russia where they sing songs of labor and heroism,” and he’d perform something from the Russian repertoire favored by the Soviet authorities.

Over time, recalled Moshe, even the Russians enjoyed his “Fascist Poland” examples. It was an audience unlike any he’d ever had before. He inserted every ounce of Jewish angst that he possibly could into these “demonstrations.” After every concert he’d return to his room despondent and broken-hearted.

In 1941 a Moscow gathering was held in honor of Polish Jewish writers who’d escaped to Russia. The master of ceremonies was the actor Shlomo Mikhoels (1890-1948), one of many Jewish artists whom Stalin would purge after the war. When Koussevitzky entered the room, Mikhoels noticed and asked him from the podium whether he’d favor those present with his singing—not operatic arias but *alte lieder* “old songs”—meaning prayers. Moshe

caught the innuendo and replied that he, too, loved to hear “old songs.” He chanted *Kol Nidre* and *Un’taneh tokef* at this “Communist” gathering in the Godless Soviet Union’s epicenter. That same year he appeared at a concert organized by the Central Arts Committee, with tremendous success. Afterwards, his accompanist, the pianist Kapochinsky, sent him a photo with the inscription: “To an artist on the highest level that I’ve ever been privileged to appear with.”

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, Moshe began traveling from one military base to another, cheering the troops. Occasionally some Russian officer would request that he sing *Kol Nidre*. Whenever that happened his listeners would invariably end up weeping. The Soviet authorities valued the treasure that Moshe’s voice represented. When German forces neared Moscow and it was feared that the city would fall into their hands, the government was moved to Kovichov—and Moshe along with it. His name was officially Russified to Mikhael Viktoriyevich (his late father Avigdor posthumously becoming Viktor). He sang in the most far-flung bases, and the soldiers—entranced by his Slavic-sounding lyrico-dramatic tenor—couldn’t applaud him enough.

A concert of his in September 1943 rated mention in *Di Tsayt* of London:

**Khazn Koussevitzky’s “Kol Nidre” in Moscow: A
Huge Concert Sponsored by the State Musical Academy**

The article went on to describe the event’s considerable success, name the accompanist, Jacob Kletzky, and list the full program. Koussevitzky sang in Yiddish, Russian, Polish, Italian and Spanish, the highlight of the evening being *Kol Nidre*. Attending were Jews and non-Jews, among them several senior officers of the Red Army. The artist was obliged to repeat the *Kol Nidre* several times, and tears glistened in the eyes of many. New York’s *Morning Journal* also gave the concert full coverage, adding that Koussevitzky sang *Kol Nidre* at all his concerts for the troops, and that hardened fighters often burst into tears upon hearing the prayer.

In 1944 Moshe was sent to Tiflis, the capitol of Gruzia, and was immediately made leading tenor of the local opera company. Among other roles he appeared as Eleazar in *La Juive*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Alfredo in *La Traviata* and Prince Shouisky in *Boris Goudonov*. He also appeared as a guest artist with the opera companies of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and Odessa. He and his family were finally reunited and they remained in Tiflis for a year. It was not an easy year. His success aroused jealousy, and more than once he spotted

an automobile closely following his, apparently bent on causing an accident that would remove him as a competitor onstage.

The European phase of World War II ended with Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender to the Allied forces under General Dwight Eisenhower on May 8, 1945. In Gruzia, Moshe Koussevitzky learned that the Soviet government had signed a treaty that allowed Polish citizens residing in Russia to return home. In Moscow, a rapidly set up Polish Jewish Committee was aiding the returning refugees, and Moshe went there to avail himself of their help. He didn't dare attempt to contact them from Tiflis, for fear that the local opera company wouldn't release him. Rabbi Elhanan Surutzkin advised him to approach Chief Rabbi Schleifer of Moscow, and through him, the Central Synagogue's *gabba'im*. The latter arranged for him to officiate there for the *Yamim nora'im* of 1945, as well as for *Pesah* of 1946. For *Yamim nora'im* of 1946 he officiated in Bournemouth, England, "through the generosity of Reuben Marriott of the famed Green Park Hotel and a few of his friends," according to the Centennial Commemorative publication of the Bournemouth Synagogue.

Still others helped him to obtain a release from the Tiflis Opera and bring his family to Moscow. In 1946, a conference for the purpose of repatriating all Jews living in the Soviet Union took place in Moscow. The actress Ida Kaminska spoke, along with the poet Elkhanan Indelman and Professor Berel Mark. Among the guests were Russo-Jewish writers Peretz Markish, Itzik Pfeffer, Der Nistor, Dovid Bergelson, Dovid Hofstein, and the actor Shlomo Mikhoels. Moshe Koussevitzky was asked to recite a memorial prayer for those who were murdered in the Holocaust. When he uttered the words *Eil malei rahamim...* the entire assemblage broke into tears. According to eyewitness Yosef Shimon Goldstein, it took several hours until the proceedings could continue.

Before his return to Poland in June 1946, Moshe participated in a memorial service for Mikhael Kalinin, the Soviet President who had been a friend to the Jews. As for returning to Moscow, Moshe told friends that, were he to receive a formal invitation to visit the Soviet Union, as had Jan Peerce, he would like nothing better than to officiate again at the Central Synagogue as he had in 1945 and 1946.

Moshe emigrated to America in 1947, still using the Russified name Mikhael. The *New York Post* was so intrigued that it ran a full-page feature on him. Along with his amazing wartime story, it quoted a few of the 1938 reviews, including the critics' marveling at his ability to execute a perfect trill—full voice—on high B-flat. The article also mentioned—in passing—that Kous-

sevitzy's daily breakfast consisted of seven oranges. That day, grocery stores in every Jewish neighborhood of the city sold out their stock of citrus fruit.

*A much sought-after author, lecturer and journalist, Akiva Zimmermann has published over 4,000 articles, reviews, essays and books on the history and performance of Jewish sacred music, for numerous publishing houses, journals and periodicals, in several languages. This chronicle of Moshe Koussevitzky's career in Vilna, Warsaw and Russia between the Wars is excerpted from **Zakhor ezk'renu od—I Remember Him Still**—commemorating the centennial of the great cantor's birth (Tel Aviv: Sha'arei ron, 1999) and is reprinted here in translation, with permission. Akiva Zimmermann's article, "R'shuyot for the sh'lichah tsibbur," appeared in the Fall 2008 **Journal**. His seventh book, devoted to the cantor and scholar Pinchas Minkowsky, was released earlier this year.*

*In America as in Europe, Moshe Koussevitzky's dramatic interpretations of others' compositions proved to be the vehicles that people most closely associated with him. A typical example is Moshe's recording of his friend Israel Alter's **Akavya** ("The son of Mahalalel taught that awareness of our beginning, our end, and before Whom we shall one day have to account for our lives, will keep us from wrongdoing") has influenced two generations of performers as well as appreciators of enduring hazzanic chant. Israeli music critic Menachem Kipnis characterized that recording as being duly produced **k'-dat moshe v'yisrael** ("according to the law of Moses and Israel"; Akiva Zimmermann, "They Were Four," **Journal of Synagogue Music**, vol. XI, no. 2, December 1981: 34). [JAL]*

Akavya ben mahalaleil omeir

Text: Pirke Avot, 3.1

Music: Israel Alter, 1930

Piano: J. Mandelbrod

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 1-4) features a vocal line starting with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a melodic phrase: A - kav-ya ben ma-ha-lal- (with a triplet of eighth notes). The piano accompaniment begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G, and then a series of eighth notes. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the vocal line with: eil o- meir, A - kav- ya ben ma-ha-lal - eil o-meir;-. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The third system (measures 9-12) starts with a vocal line: A - kav-ya ben ma-ha-lal - eil o - meir. The piano accompaniment begins with a *mf* dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

15

his-tak-

20 keil bi-sh'lo-shah d'-va-rim__ v'-ein, v'-ein__ a tah__ va, v'-

Detailed description: This system contains measures 15 through 23. The vocal line (top staff) has lyrics: "his-tak-", "keil bi-sh'lo-shah d'-va-rim__ v'-ein, v'-ein__ a tah__ va, v'-". The piano accompaniment (middle and bottom staves) features several triplet figures in the right hand and block chords in the left hand. Measure numbers 20 and 21 are indicated on the left.

24

ein, v'-ein. a- tah__ va;__ v'-ein a-tah va li-dei a-vei-

p

Detailed description: This system contains measures 24 through 27. The vocal line (top staff) has lyrics: "ein, v'-ein. a- tah__ va;__ v'-ein a-tah va li-dei a-vei-". The piano accompaniment (middle and bottom staves) features triplet figures in the right hand and block chords in the left hand. A piano dynamic marking (*p*) is present in measure 26. Measure numbers 24 and 25 are indicated on the left.

28

rah. A-

pp *p espr.*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 28 through 31. The vocal line (top staff) has lyrics: "rah. A-". The piano accompaniment (middle and bottom staves) features triplet figures in the right hand and block chords in the left hand. Dynamic markings *pp* and *p espr.* are present. Measure numbers 28 and 29 are indicated on the left.

32

kav- ya ben ma-ha-lal - eil___ o meir___ his-tak - keil bi-sh' -lo-shah d' -va-

35

rim_ v' -ein a-tah va, li-dei a-vei- rah;_ da mei-a-yin ba-ta

41

u - l' -an a-tah ho- leikh_ v' -li -f' - nei___

46

mi___ a - tah a -tid___ lit - tein___ din v' -hesh-

50

bon; mei - a - yin ba - ta,

53

da, da, mei - a - yin ba - ta.

57

U - l' - an a - tah ho -

p espr.

60

leikh, u - l' - an a - tah ho - leikh; da, his-tak-keil v' -

64

da _____ l' - an, _____ l' - an_ a - tah ho - leikh; _____ l' -

67

an, _____ l' - an_ a - tah ho - leikh, a - tah ho - leikh, _____ a - tah ho -

pp *rall.*

70

leikh, _____ li - m' - kom a - far _____ ri - mah _____ v' - to -

rall. *morendo*

73

lei_ ah, _____ v' - li - f' - nei _____ mi _____

p

76

a-tah a-tid_ li-tein din v'-hesh-

81

bon, a-tah a-tid_ li-tein din v'-hesh-

85

bon li-f'-nei me-lekh ma-l'-khei ha-m'-la-

88

khim_ hak-ka-dosh ba-ruk hu.

The Cantor of Czyzewo¹

By Gerszon Gora, translated by Jerrold Landau

Cantorial issues never affected the town. There was never any need to advertise prior to the High Holy Days that they were searching for a qualified cantor for the Musaf services, as was the case in many other towns where the issues surrounding cantors took a very important place.

Reb Eliezer, the cantor of the town, was a “Cantor” in the full sense of the word. He served as the prayer leader in the Great *beis medrash* and was the cantor of the masses of people in the town, of all of the artisans, merchants, and workshop owners who were not of Hasidic extraction and who had worshipped for generations in the Great *beis medrash* in accordance with the Ashkenazic prayer rite. He was especially the cantor of hundreds of pious women who on the High Holy Days all looked similar to each other, like cherubs with their white, shiny, clear clothing. These were pure and sincere women, who never turned their attention to differences of opinions and the opposing views of Hasidim and Misnagdim, or between the Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Habad and Arizal prayer rites. It was the woven prayer of a Jewish woman coming from her heart.

In the women’s balcony, which was like a large gallery of pillars that occupied half of the space of the *Beis Midrash*, all of the women of the town gathered together in one unit, or more accurately—with one heart. There worshipped the wives of the Hasidim and Misnagdim, of the Zionists and Agudists, of the Aleksander and Gur Hasidim. When on occasion the modern elements recommended bringing a modern cantor for the High Holy Days, a cantor who knew how to sing with a choir, who wore a tall, velvet hat and held a tuning fork in his hands—the *gabba'im* (trustees) of the synagogue would push aside this suggestion immediately, without bringing it to deliberation. For it was sufficient for these *gabba'im* to hear the enthusiastic opinion of these women about the prayers of Reb Eliezer, which they found to grow more meaningful and sweeter every year, in order to push aside any recommendation of this nature.

The songs and melodies of Reb Eliezer the Cantor were the topic of the day among all that came to the Great Synagogue on the days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Reb Eliezer was not a *ba'al t'fillah* (lay prayer leader) like Reb Shaul Tzvi in the synagogue of the Gur Hasidim, Reb Yeshaya of the synagogue of the

1 (Yiddish: Tshizev), in the Lomza district of Poland, near Bialystok.

Aleksander Hassidim, Reb Barukh the teacher in the synagogue of the Sokolow Hasidim, Reb Yankel Vibitker in “Khevra Mishnayos” or the other volunteer leaders of the Hasidic prayer halls of the town. He was called “Reb Eliezer the Cantor,” and that was fitting for him. His manner of standing at the prayer podium, his motions and enthusiastic melodies, as well as his clear, fine voice—all of these gave him the character of an experienced, professional cantor. I can still remember the unique image of his face, as if he stands alive before my eyes: He was of average height. He had a dark beard that was divided into two sections. The edges of the sections had turned silver, as if they were singed by the flame of advancing age. His cheeks were thin and sunken, which made his high, wide forehead stand out even further. His eyes were always raised upward, so that your gaze would never meet his. He could chat with you for hours without gazing directly at you with his eyes. He always made the impression on everyone that he had a special relationship with Heaven, a certain soulful attraction.

He occupied himself with his profession all the days of the year—or to be more specific, his wife and daughters worked at their profession—the baking of black rye. This bakery was called by his name: the Bakery of Reb Eliezer, even though he himself did not know how to place dough into a bucket.

His only occupation was to assist from time to time in some sort of good deed in order to ease the burden upon some person. He spent the rest of his time in the Hasidic synagogue or in the Beis Midrash in front of an open book, as he silently hummed heartwarming melodies. He was always engrossed in thought. When he walked along the way, when he was standing, when he was sitting with a book, his thoughts always enveloped him completely. He always seemed like one who was caught in a place that was not his own, as if he was a wanderer in a strange place. For what was the purpose of all of the days and nights of the year, when it was impossible to pour himself out before the podium with prayers and supplications to the Holy One Blessed Be He, and to express the feelings of the heart and soul with such heartwarming and awe-inspiring hymns?

Indeed, this was the nature of Reb Eliezer the Cantor. It was as if his soul was created on the six days of creation for the sole purpose of the prayers on the High Holy Days, and the purpose of his life was only for those pleasant Musaf services that he performed with his voice, in the town of Tshizev. Therefore, his life throughout the year was like a life lacking in content. Only as the High Holy Days neared, when Aharon the *shammash* announced on Friday night his traditional announcement that on Saturday night at midnight,

the S'lihot service would take place, did the fire of life burn in the eyes of Reb Eliezer. His eyes appeared as burning coals.

To what is this similar? It is like a fish that is taken out of water, that flutters about and struggles bitterly as it does not have a drop of water to breathe. At the moment that it is returned to the water, it turns immediately into a new creature, influenced with pleasant, effervescent life.

Those days, the days of Selichot and the Ten Days of Penitence, were to him like the source of living waters, clear, fresh water, which restored his soul to its full life. Then, all of the melodies and tunes that were hidden away all year in the recesses of his heart were reawakened, and began to break out. During those days, when he sat in his home, when he ate his meals, when he walked around the streets looking for a good deed to perform, one could hear from his mouth the pleasant melody of a hymn or a prayer. This was a sort of practice, a preparation for the High Holy Days, when the tune would break out with its full strength and sweetness.

Reb Eliezer did not conduct himself like other cantors, who would practice for many weeks with a choir prior to the High Holy Days, in order that the prayers should sound “just so.” He did not follow this pattern. He would say, “A cantor does not perform tricks. He has to prepare his heart, and the tunes and melodies will come out properly.”

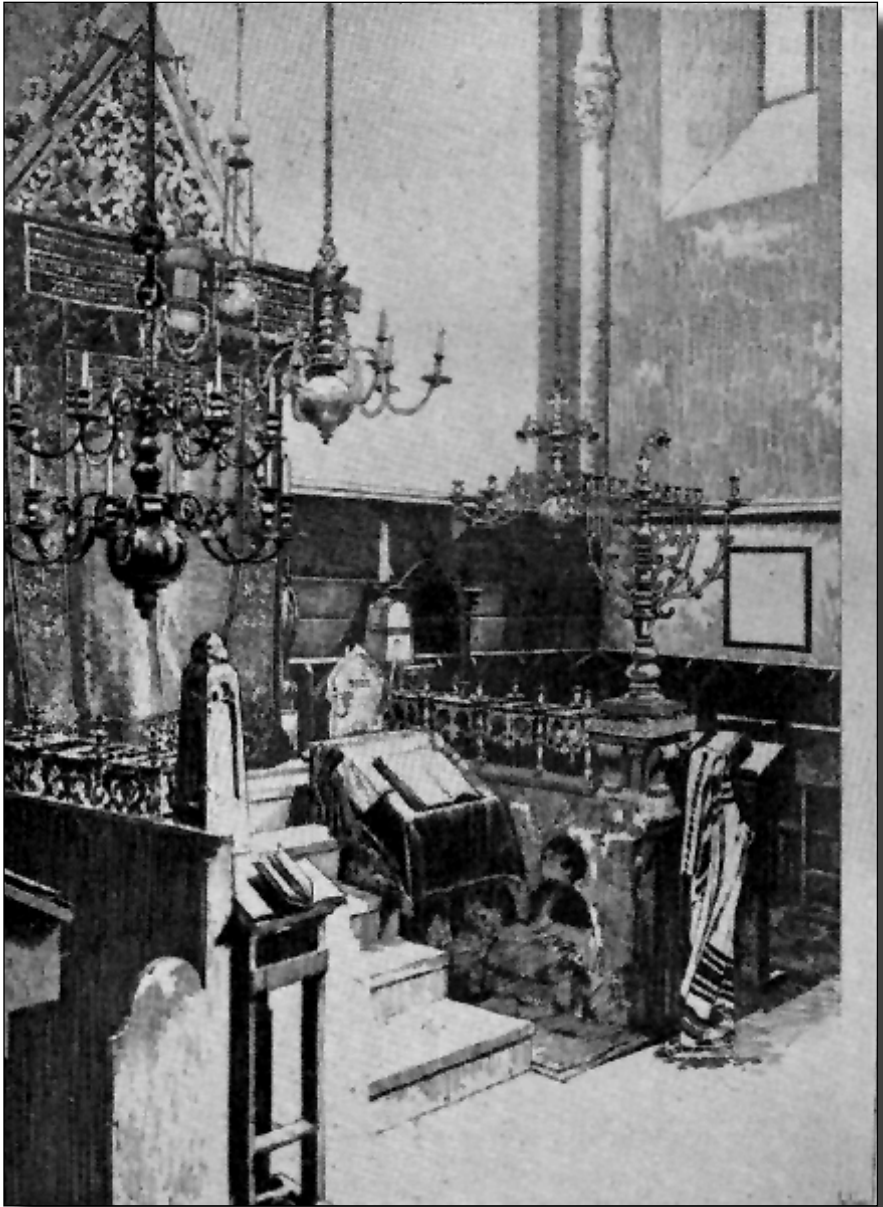
The impression of those High Holy Days is still etched deep inside of me. The synagogue was filled to the brim, especially on Yom Kippur when even the “barber,” the only Sabbath desecrator in the city, was not missing. All of the worshippers were dressed in festive clothing. Meir and Binyumkhe, the two well-known “drawers of water” whose characteristic pictures were publicized by the American gazettes, were seated next to the western table. Behind them were the porters and wagon drivers who used to worship at the early Minyan, before sunrise, throughout the year. The women of the town peered through the windows of the women’s gallery at the large congregation and the cantor standing next to the podium like a conductor. The cantor stood there, his face like an angel, covered in his white *kitl* and over that, his *tallis*, decorated with a filigreed silver *atarah*. He was assisted by his two sons. He supplicated, sang endearing melodies and poured out his prayers as a trusted emissary of the congregation, standing before the Holy One Blessed Be He. Reb Eliezer composed new, original tunes for *K'vakarat* (“as a shepherd tends his flock”) and *Heyeih im pifyot* (“Be our advocate”), etc. The congregation of worshippers reached the peak of emotion as he recited the hymn *Eileh ezkerah v'nafshi alai eshpekhah*, whose theme is the Ten Sages Martyred by the Romans. His voice was soft or was weeping as he poured out his heart

to all of the themes described in the moving words. The men and women of the congregation wept together with him.

Reb Eliezer was weak by nature. His shriveled and lean body always suffered from various ailments. Nevertheless, despite the fact that he expended his entire essence in his prayers, the High Holy Days were to him a source of health and strength. It was as if he could not live throughout the year were it not for the merit of these days.

Reb Eliezer's tenure lasted for many decades without interruption. Throughout those years, he bestowed the best of his melodies, enchanting tunes and heartwarming singing upon the townsfolk, until that bitter and violent day when they were all brought to slaughter and buried in a large communal grave. Then Reb Eliezer the Cantor perished as well—may God avenge his death—and his voice was silenced forever.

*This memoir appears in **The Czyzewo [Poland] Memorial Book**, translation of Sefer Zikaron Czyzewo, Szymon Kand, ed. (Tel-Aviv: Its Former Residents), 1961. <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Czyzew/czy0781.html>*



E. M. Lilien, "Ghetto Synagogue," *Juda*, 1902
(reminiscent of the Great *beis medrash* where
the Cantor or *Czyzewo* officiated)

Ishei yisrael u-t'fillatam

(Compiled by Joseph Levine
and Solomon Mendelson)

For this ongoing project to document the hazzanim of Europe whose bodies along with their prayers rose as smoke through the air during the Shoah; additional information from *Journal* readers would be appreciated. The phrase *ishei yisrael* originally described the intensity of religious fervor required for true prayer, as if to say: "May our words have the same meaning and effect as burnt offerings once did for our ancestors." It is used here to indicate that in the death camps, our fellow *sh'lihei tsibbur* and their prayers *themselves became* the "fiery offerings" of their era.

Associate Editor's Note: For the first time, I feel the need to comment publicly. Halfway through the list of names, I had to write for no other reason than being overwhelmed. To no other article in the years that I have formatted the JSM, have I had such an emotional response. With each keystroke, with each name, city and camp, my heart ached. I thought of the hands that first recorded each name, of the people who recovered those lists, and of those who promulgated them for us so that we may never forget. We know every one these people listed, for they are us. Please study them with reverence, as I did and continue to do so. [RMB]

1444 names as of October 18, 2010

<u>LAST & FIRST NAME</u>	<u>BORN</u>	<u>SERVED IN</u>	<u>WHERE & WHEN DIED</u>
A			
Aardewerk, Shmuel		Alpen Rijn, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Abkiewicz, Yaakov Leib	1864	Zagorow, Poland	Zagorow, Poland, 1941
Abram, Heiman	1914	Amsterdam, Holland	Fürstengrube, Poland 1943
Abramis, Abram	1871	Gorodok, Russia	Riga, Latvia, 1941
Abramowitz, Yehuda	1895	Stoklishok, Lithuania	Stoklishok, Lithuania
Abramowitz, Yitzkhak Benzion	1889	Jassy, Romania	Jassy, Romania, 1941
Abramson, Moshe	1884	Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia
Acco, Marco	1880	Trieste, Italy	Germany
Adler, Bernhard	1869	Schweinfurt, Bavaria	Theresienstadt, Cz., 1943
Adler, Josef	1921	Frankfurt/Main, Germ.	Bergen-Belsen, Germ. 1945
Aikhenbaum, Mordechai	1870	DnepoPetrovsky, Ukr.	Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, 1944
Aizental, Haim Avraham		Dorohoi, Romania	Kapustyani, Ukraine
Akerman, Yosef	1875	Kurow, Poland	Kurow, Poland
Albala, Benvenisti	1876	Kastoria, Macedonia	Birkenau, Poland, 1944
Alkabez, Eli	1920	Dimotika, Greece	Auschwitz, Poland

Alkalai, Juda Leon	1878	Sarajevo, Bosnia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1942
Alkalai, Mordekhai Jehuda	1877	Sarajevo, Bosnia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia
Alkalai, Rakhamim		Beograd, Serbia	Beograd, Serbia
Allegra, Jacob	1920	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Alpern, Avraham	1864	Pozecze, Poland	1942
Alperovitz, Yitzkhak David	1853	Yurburg, Lithuania	Yurburg, Lithuania, 1941
Altarac, Izidor	1912	Bucharest, Romania	Smederevo, Yugos., 1942
Altarac, Isidor	1912	Sarajevo, Bosnia	Beograd, Serbia, 1941
Altaratz, Aharon	1899	Bijelina, Bosnia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1941
Andriessse, Andre	1915	Enschede, Holland	Mathausen, Austria, 1941
Angress, Leopold		Berlin, Germany	
Anisman, Avraham	1887	Sosnowiec, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Antman, Faivel		Przemsyl, Poland	Lvov, Poland
Anzel, Moshe	1911	Lelow, Poland	Skarzisk, Poland, 1943
Arnstein, Yitzkhak	1877	Galanta, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Aronovitz, Azriel	1890	Mihaileni, Romania	Podul, Moldavia, 1941
Aryluk, Aron	1895	Astrakhan, Russia	Stalingrad, Russia, 1942
As, Hersh-Tzvi	1870	Wilno, Poland	Wilno, Poland, 1943
Asaf, Moshe		Dereczyn, Poland	Dereczyn, Poland, 1942
Atijas, David		Zagreb, Croatia	Zagreb, Croatia, 1941
Auchhiesiger, Eliezer	1887	Chrzanow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Averbukh, Hersh	1864	Kamenetz, Ukraine	1941

B

Babushkin, Aron		Sosnitsa, Ukraine	Vyunische, Ukraine, 1941
Bachrach, Israel	1918	Gravenhage, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Badmann, Hans	1923	Frankfurt/Main, Germ.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Bakin, Yisrael		Krakow, Poland	
Bakon, Khaim	1878	Berlin, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland
Bakon, Srulik	1910	Berlin, Germany	
Balaban, David Otto	1913	Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Balaban, Motl	1896	Ismail, Romania	Ismail, Romania, 1941
Balaban, Natan	1872	Radziwillow, Poland	Radziwillow, Poland, 1942
Balaban, Natan	1905	Rowne, Poland	1942
Balibar, Mikhael		Yaroslow, Poland	
Baran, Boris	1897	Frankfurt/Main, Germ.	
Barkan, Yaakov Benzion	1900	Gargzdai, Lithuania	Kowno, Lithuania
Barnbojm, Lippe	1885	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1942
Bas, Yosef	1911	Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Bass, Moshe		Bialystok, Poland	Poland, 1943
Basch, Arnold	1913	Zagreb, Croatia	Jasenovac, Croatia, 1945
Baum, Max Elimelekh	1894	Cologne, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Baum, Shalom	1900	Komorow, Poland	Belzyce, Poland, 1942
Bay, Salomon		Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1940
Beem, David	1925	Leeuwarden, Holland	Central Europe, 1945
Beilin, Yakov	1878	Minsk, Belorus	Minsk, Belorus, 1941

Bejarano,		Saarbruecken, Germ.	Auschwitz, Poland
Bekerman, Eliezer Lipkin	1890	Koluszki, Poland	Koluszki, Poland, 1942
Belferman, Avraham	1898	Briceva, Romania	Obodovka, Ukraine, 1941
Belkin, Lazar Moshe	1870	Rechitsa, Belarus	Uzbekistan Russia, 1942
Belogorsky, Gershko	1892	Sremska, Yugoslavia	Sremska, Yugoslavia
Ben Aizik, Moshe	1900	Pozarski, Poland	Pozarski, Poland, 1942
Bendzel, Michael David	1896	Bydgoszcz, Poland	Steineck, Poland, 1942
Benis, Wolf	1898	Lukow, Poland	Szumsk, Poland
Ben Mordekhai, Yankel	1890	Pozarski, Poland	Pozarski, Poland, 1942
Ben Mordekhai, Yoineh	1900	Pozarski, Poland	Pozarski, Poland, 1942
Ben Tzion, Yitzkhak	1872	Bitola, Yugoslavia	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Ber, Avraham Yehoshua	1879	Trisk, Poland	Trisk, Poland, 1943
Berakha, Moshe	1871	Yugoslavia	Nish, Serbia
Berger,			Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Berger, Karlo	1902	Sombor, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Berger, Lajos	1886	Bercel, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Berger, Meir	1872	Rawa, Poland	Belzyce, Poland, 1943
Berger, Moshe Yehuda	1901	Tyszowce, Poland	Lvov, Poland
Berger, Shlomo	1870	Pozarski, Poland	Pozarski, Poland, 1942
Berger, Yehuda Moshe	1904		Ukraine
Berglas, Tzvi	1885	Dombrowa, Poland	
Beringoltz, Khaim		Kiev, Ukraine	Babi Yar, Ukraine, 1941
Berinhalt, Avraham Yitzkhak	1887	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1944
Berkman, Shmuel	1891	Starobin, Belarus	Starobin, Belarus, 1941
Berkovitz, Leib	1895	Belgium	
Berkovitz, Moshe Aharon	1896	Cardo, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Berlinger, Arthur	1889	Schweinfurt, Bavaria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Berman, Pinkhas Meir	1868	Wielun, Poland	Wielun, Poland, 1941
Berman, Volf	1896	Zgurita, Bessarabia	Bacseni, Bessarabia, 1941
Berman, Yeshayahu	1905	Bereza, Poland	Bronogura, Poland
Bernath, Avraham	1883	Nagy Banya, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland
Bernshtein, Asher		Tarnopol, Poland	Tarnopol, Poland, 1941
Bernstein, Yaakov Yitzkhak	1887	Kasha, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Bess, Yehoshua Hershel		Lublin, Poland	
Bialy, Eliyahu	1902	Wlodawa, Poland	Sobibor, Poland, 1942
Bikhstein, Yitzkhak	1870	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland, 1942
Bilitzer, Amram	1912	Hungary	
Bilitzer, Erno-Amram Yishai	1904	Budapest, Hungary	Ukraine, 1943
Bilitzer, Jenö	1903	Budapest, Hungary	Russia
Bilitzer, Jenö Yoav	1870	Debrecen, Hungary	Hillersleben, Germany, 1945
Bilitzer, Mor	1890		Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Bilitzer, Moshe David	1876	Eger, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Bindefeld, Nachman Nathan	1906	Paris, France	1944
Birman, Shalom	1898	Kishinev, Bessarabia	
Birnbaum, Moshe	1888	Sombor, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Birnbaum, Mordekhai	1886	Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia, 1942
Birnbaum, Samuel	1920	Berlin, Germany	Sobibor, Poland, 1945

Bitenski, Josef Gershon		Chomsk, Poland	
Bitenski, Sender Yaakov		Chomsk, Poland	
Blan, Gustav	1883	Jihlava, Czech.	Lizmannstadt, Poland, 1942
Blanes, Jacob David Yaakov	1877	Amsterdam, Holland	Westerbrook, Holland, 1943
Blass, Wolf	1889	Chzanow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Blasz, Bela-Baruch Avraham	1916	Tapolca, Slovakia	
Blasz, Shmuel		Eger, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Blau, Shmuel		Gyergyoszentmiklos, Rom.	Debrecen, Hungary, 1943
Blaufelder, Ignatz	1870	Banska, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Bloch, Abraham		Schmieheim, Germany	Bavaria
Bloch, Albert	1893	Muttershotz, France	
Blumenfeld, Moshe		Krakow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Blumenfeld, Yosef	1910	Cluj, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Borkhovich, Eliezer	1885	Ciechanow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Borenstein, Zvi		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Bornstein, Yoel	1890	Paris, France	
Bornsztain, Leib	1914	Lodz, Poland	Poland, 1943
Borodkin, Aharon Yehuda	1876	Berlin, Germany	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Borstein, Chaim-Boruch		Proshnitz, Poland	Makov-Mazovietz, P., 1939
Bram, Shlomo Barukh	1900	Poland	Kolo, Poland, 1942
Bramson, Jacob	1915	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Brand, Zeev	1878	Otaci, Bessarabia	Otaci, Bessarabia, 1941
Brandsdorfer Visman, Yitzkhak	1898	Subotica, Yugoslavia	Hungary, 1944
Braun, David	1910	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Braun, Shmuel Pinchas	1874	Balagsaryamat, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Bravmann, Beniamin	1875	Bruchsal, Germany	1940
Bril, Natan	1880	Brno, Moravia	
Bronshtein, Mordekhai	1919	Pressburg, Slovakia	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Bublik, Shmuel	1865	Grodno, Poland	Grodno, Poland, 1942
Buchsbaum, Michael		Poland	Bergen-Belsen, Germany
Bukhshpan Keller, Khaim	1907	Rotterdam, Holland	1943
Bueno, Yaakov	1890	Saloniki, Macedonia	
Byzdrowski, Mordekhai		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1939

C

Cahn, Siegmund	1888	Hamburg, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland
Caler, Chuny		Pasechna, Poland	Nadworna, Poland
Cauveren, Jacob	1919	Hasselt, Belgium	Mathausen, Austria, 1941
Celadnitzki, Yekhiel	1896	Kaluszyn, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Cervinski, Aron-Josef		Kishinev, Bessarabia	Transnistria, Roumania, 1941
Chamenes, Khaim Yisrael	1884	Siedliscze, Poland	1942
Charan, Yosef	1911	Lodz, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Chasan Daum, Hermann	1899	Miroslav, Moravia	Britany, Ukraine
Chasanovich, Moshe		Konstantinow, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Chazan, Wolf	1890	Pozarsky, Poland	Pozarsky, Poland, 1942
Chiefertz, Avraham Mikhael		Sirvintai, Lithuania	Vilna, Lithuania

Chibel, Benzion	1894	Wyszkow, Poland	Wyszkow, Poland
Cholawski, Shalom	1910	Nieswicz, Poland	Nieswicz, Poland, 1942
Chrzelistzer, Bernhard Ralph	1902	Berlin, Germany	Berlin, Germany, 1944
Citrinarz, Yehuda	1890	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1943
Colewa, Khaim	1907	Czestochow, Poland	Buchenwald, Germany, 1945
Coen, Eugenio	1880	Padova, Italy	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Cohen Isaac	1917	Watergraafsmeer, Holl.	Limburg, Holland, 1945
Cohen, Izak	1920	Leiden, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Cohen, Philip	1918	Amsterdam, Holland	1943
Cohen, Yosef	1893	Zutphen Holland	Poland, 1944
Cohn, Artur	1924	Krakow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Cohn, Julius	1904	Hamburg, Germany	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Cuker, Symcha	1911	Tomaszow, Poland	Tomaszow, Poland, 1942
Cukier, Simcha	1891	Lodz, Poland	Treblinka, Poland,
Cwilich, Yosef Ber	1874	Rozprza, Poland	Piotrikow, Poland, 1942
Cymerman, Dr. Chaim		Lublin, Poland	
Cypkus, Mordekhai Yehoshua	1892	Kishinev, Bessarabia	Kishinev, Bessarabia, 1942
Cytrinyarz, Yehuda	1897	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland

D

Danhirsh, Morris	1929	Hrushowice, Poland	
Daniel, Mikhael	1882	Schlochau, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Dankowski, Eliyahu Tzvi	1895	Gniezmo, Poland	1940
Danziger, Samuel	1894	Neustadt, Germany	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Davidavitch, Morris		Lodz, Poland	
Davidson, David	1890	Zwolle, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Dawidowitz, Yitzkhak Shmuel	1887	Lodz, Poland	Ludz, Poland, 1942
Dawidowicz, Avraham Tzvi		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Dawidowski, Eliezer	1900	Czartorysk, Poland	Czartorysk, Poland, 1942
De Goede, Abraham	1915	Amsterdam, Holland	Poland, 1944
De Haan, Abraham	1923	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Hond, Aaron	1926	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Jong, Gerardus	1904	Emmen, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Jong, Shlomo		Amsterdam, Holland	
De Leeuw, Arthur	1922	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
De Lieme, Herman Isidor	1905	Hertogenbosch, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
De Lieme, Meijer	1874	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Lieme, Mozes	1916	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Metz, Moos		Zutphen, Holland	
Denberg, Moshe Barukh	1890	Poland	Sarny, Poland, 1942
Denneboom, Ezra	1924	Veendam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Deskal, Meir	1880	Satmar, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Deskal, Menakhem	1882	Czenger, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Deutsch, Eliezer Lajos		Nancy, France	Auschwitz, Poland
Deutsch, Voitech	1913	Nitra, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
De Vries, Max	1927	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943

De Vries, Nico	1919	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Wit, Herman	1928	Gravenhage, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
De Wolf, Avraham	1878	Alkmaar, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
De Zoete, Jacob	1923	Purmerend, Holland	Bergen-Belsen, Germ., 1945
Diamant, Yisrael		Lodz, Poland	
Diner, Meir	1898	Kowel, Poland	Risha, Poland, 1945
Dligach, Yoel	1870	Trembowla, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Dobray, Zigmund	1900	Odessa, Ukraine	Kharkov, Ukraine, 1941
Dobrowska, Berl	1900	Grodno, Poland	Majdanek, Poland, 1941
Doft, Tzvi Hersh		Paris, France	Auschwitz, Poland
Doft, Yehoshua	1880	Bilke, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Doich, Hersh	1924	Ternovo, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Dolgopolak, Aizig	1891	Kowel, Poland	Kowel, Poland, 1942
Drukker, Joseph	1891	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Dub, Shloima	1881	Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine, 1941
Duft, Herman	1905	Paris, France	
Duitz, Herman	1913	Amsterdam, Holland	Central Europe, 1944
Duizend, Gabriel	1925	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Duizend, Joseph	1920	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Dunaevsky, Aron	1884	Zvenigorodka, Ukraine	
Durmashkin, Akiva		Vilna, Lithuania	Ponary, Lithuania, 1942
Durmashkin, Victor	1896	Radom, Poland	
Dym, David		Antwerp, Belgium	
Dzinkovitz, Aizek	1893	Dobeik, Lithuania	Dobeik, Lithuania, 1942

E

Edelstein, Barukh	1895	Krakow, Poland	Krakow, Poland
Einhorn, Moshe		Nagybarca, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Eisenberger, Benjamin	1891	Nyiregyhaza, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Eisenstadt, David	1890	Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Eisikowitz, Isaac		Britt, Czechoslovakia	Austria, 1944
Eisner, Jeno	1903	Nyiregyhaza, Hungary	Rus, Romania, 1943
Eizental, Avraham Khaim		Dorohoi, Romania	Kapustyani, Ukraine
Eliezer, Moshe		Nis, Yugoslavia	
Eliezer the Cantor		Czyzewo, Poland	Schulzborge, Poland, 1941
Ellenbogen, Mor	1879	Gyoma, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Emanuel, Reuven	1865	Veria, Macedonia	Auschwitz, Poland
Engelberg, Aharon Adolph	1868	Dunafoldvar, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1945
Engelman, Volf		Komiaty, Czech.	Mathausen, Austria, 1945
Engelshtein, Moshe Asher Zelig	1903	Warsaw, Poland	
Englander, Shmuel		Amsterdam, Holland	
Epshtein, Yisrael Ber	1880	Zdzieciol, Poland	Zdzieciol, Poland
Ergas, Shabtai	1861		Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Erlikh, Khaim Leib	1892	Myslowice, Poland	
Erlikhman, Moshe Velvel	1872	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland
Ernfeld, Yitzkhak	1905	Trnava, Czechoslovakia	

Eschwege, Natan	1888	Malsch/Karlsruhe, Ger.	Auschwitz, Poland
Eschwege, Simon	1879	Frankfurt, Germany	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Estroumza, Elie		Saloniki, Macedonia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Ezrovitz, Shimon	1889	Nagysurany, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944

F

Fainer, Benya		Tomashpol, Ukraine	Tomashpol, Ukraine, 1941
Farbstein, Bunim	1913	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Faibisz, Yisrael		Lvov, Poland	
Faintukh, Benzion	1895	Jassy, Moldavia	Jassy, Moldavia, 1941
Falperin, Tuvia	1890	Kossow, Poland	
Farkash, Yitzkhak Hersh	1890	Urmin, Slovakia	
Farbstein, Bunim		Bialystok, Poland	
Fastag, Azriel David		Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Fater, Shmuel Itzhak	1888	Mazowiecki, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Feierman, Shmuel		Sosnowiec, Poland	
Feigenbaum, Yekhiel	1908	Filesti, Moldavia	Transnistria, Ukraine, 1941
Fein, Yitzkhak Salomon	1885	Senta, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Fein, Zeev	1880	Trnava, Slovakia	1942
Felberbaum, Yehoshua	1895	Nagachev, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Feldman, Mordekhai	1884	Pressburg, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Feldmann, Hugo Hirsch	1882	Munich, Bavaria	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Feldshtein, Matus	1879	Kiev, Ukraine	1942
Feldshtein, Shimon	1922	Bielsko, Poland	Lvov, Poland, 1942
Feliks, Mendel		Czechoslovakia	
Felman, Khaim Leibish		Suchedniow, Poland	1943
Fershtendig, Zeev Volf		Brzozov, Poland	
Fershtand, Moshe		Jano Lubelski, Poland	1942
Fidan, Yaakov		Kishinev, Bessarabia	
Filipovitz, Shmuel		Szentes, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Filipovitz, Shmuel	1882	Suwalki, Poland	Lublin, Poland, 1942
Fingerhut, Khaim	1891	Budapest, Hungary	Mathausen, Austria
Fingerhut, Shlomo	1904	Ruma, Yugoslavia	Ruma, Yugoslavia
Finkelshtein, Eliezer		Riga, Latvia	
Finkelstein, Moshe Meir	1865	Bukowskow, Poland	Belzec, Poland
Firanco, Shlomo	1885	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
First, Moshe	1896	Tarnopol, Poland	
Fischer, Lipot	1882	Pestszenter, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Fishbein, Meir	1890	Dabrowica, Poland	Sarny, Poland, 1942
Fishbein, Mordekhai Arie Leib	1895	Jassy, Moldavia	
Fishel, Avraham		Czenstochov, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Fisher, Avraham	1871	Dobno, Poland	Dobno, Poland, 1941
Fisher, Shimon	1880	Krakow, Poland	Staszow, Poland, 1942
Fishgrund, Yaakov	1885	Krakow, Poland	Krakow, Poland
Fisman, Meir	1884	Turov, Belarus	Turov, Belarus, 1941
Fishman, Yehoshua		Cesky Tesin, Moravia	

Fizler, Gideon		Budapest, Hungary	1944
Flaks, Yehoshua	1892	Tyszowce, Poland	Zamoshch, Poland, 1942
Fleischmann, Mihaily	1899	Brno, Moravia	
Fleisher, Leib Hersh	1898	Kobryn, Poland	Slonim, Poland, 1943
Fleshner, Leibish	1885	Budzano, Poland	1942
Fleishmakher, Shaya	1894	Kiev, Ukraine	Babi Yar, Ukraine, 1941
Fleishman, Jonasz	1903		Auschwitz, Poland
Flonder, Moshe	1908	Wilno, Poland	Wolozin, Poland, 1942
Fogler, Mordekhai Yishai	1863	Kiskoros, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Fogler, Yehoshua Gimpel	1862	Kiskoros, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Franck, Jankele	1916	Crasna, Romania	Russia, 1942
Frantz, Mikhael	1901	Mezohuta, Czech.	Ukraine, 1944
Fredman, Henrich	1880	Ilk, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Freize, Khaim Yitzkhak	1868	Nowy Sacz, Poland	Nowy Sacz, Poland
Frenkel, Emanuel	1896	Vienna, Austria	Liepaja, Latvia, 1943
Frenkel, Shmuel	1910	Sopron, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1945
Frenkel, Zeev		Salva, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland
Fridja, Isaak	1915	Utrecht, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Fridman, Moshe	1903	Salgotarjan, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Fridman, Pinkhas Yaakov	1890	Bialystok, Poland	Bialystok, Poland, 1943
Fridman, Shlomo	1899	Brod, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Friedland, Hirsh	1905	Riga, Latvia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Friedman, Itche Yitzkhak		Ungvar, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland
Friedman, Moshe	1902	Satoralya Ujhely, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Friedman, Yaakov Yehuda	1893	Terscina, Czech.	Poland
Friedmann, Armin	1896	Kety, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Friedman, Zalman		Huszt, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Friedmann, Hermann		Ada, Yugoslavia	
Friedner, Barukh	1886	Frankfurt amMain, Ger.	
Frimer, Yekutiel	1877	Laszczow, Poland	Laszczow, Poland, 1942
Frister, Moshe	1899	Jassy, Moldavia	
Frohman, Mendel		Pilica, Poland	Pilica, Poland, 1942
Froind, Benjamin	1910	Breslau, Germany	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Frukhter, Moshe	1898	Transylvania, Romania	Moldavia, Romania, 1941
Fuchs, Mordekhai Naftali	1887	Trnava, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Fuerst, Eliezer		Dukla, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Furman, Moshe		Krasnik, Poland	
Fusman, Moshe		Czernowitz, Bukovina	
Futerman, Avraham		Pinsk, Belarus	

G

Galewski, Shaul	1913	Berlin, Germany	Warsaw, Poland, 1941
Galman, Rafael			Gluboki, Poland, 1942
Gamer, David	1902	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland
Ganich, Moshe		Orla, Poland	
Gans, Benjamin	1918	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Gantz, Moshe	1900	Galati, Moldavia	Murafa, Ukraine, 1945

Gantz, Shmuel	1887	Tiacewo, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland
Ganz, Naftali	1912	Luky, Slovakia	Germany
Gatovski, Moishe	1865	Minsk, Belarus	Minsk, Belarus, 1942
Gazan, Jozef	1923	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Gelbard, Arye Leib	1889	Mistelbach, Austria	Sabac, Yugoslavia, 1941
Gelbman, Yisrael	1860	Novi Knezevac, Yugos.	Jabuka Pancevo, Yugos., 1941
Gelbrunk, Eliyahu Yitzkhak		Falenitsa, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1941
Geler, Aizik		Lipcani, Bessarabia	Transnistria, Ukraine
Geler, Mikhael	1918	Lipcani, Bessarabia	Transnistria, Ukraine
Genger, Moshe		Krakow, Poland	Krakow, Poland, 1942
Gershon, Yitzkhak		Ostrava, Moravia	Russia
Gershtein, Hersh	1883	Korosten, Ukraine	Korosten, Ukraine, 1941
Gerstein, Yaakov Yosef		Yedenitz, Romania	
Gevirtzman, Yefim		Kovel, Poland	
Gildberg, Shlomo	1882	Biala Rawska, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Gildin, Efraim		Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland
Giniunski, Gidaliahu	1909	Ejszszak, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Ginsburg, Aharon	1889	Vyazyn, Poland	Vyazyn, Poland, 1942
Gitman, Iosif	1875	Leningrad, Russia	Leningrad, Russia, 1942
Gladshstein, Elkuna	1865	Lipcani, Bessarabia	
Glanz, Isser	1890	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Glatstein, Yosef		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Glatzer, Velyl	1868	Medzhibozh, Ukraine	Medzhibozh, Ukraine, 1942
Glazer, Josef	1906	Subotica, Yugoslavia	Russia
Glazer, Khanan		Vilna, Lithuania	
Glazer, Khaim Shlomo		Borszczow, Poland	
Glazer, Mordekhai Tzvi			Buchenwald, Germany, 1942
Glazman, Dovid	1901	Warsaw, Poland	Poland, 1942
Gleizer, Chaim	1886	Soroca, Bessarabia	Soroca, Bessarabia
Glik Avraham, Levi Yitzkhak	1916	Prague, Bohemia	Germany, 1944
Gliklikh, Shmuel David	1884	Hajdunasz, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Glutzksmann, Adolph		Wadowice, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Godinger, Yisrael	1914	Volove, Czechoslovakia	
Gold, Nakhum Yisrael	1880	Hungary	
Goldberg, Dov	1892	Mielnica, Poland	Mielnica, Poland, 1942
Goldberg, Moische	1895	Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Goldberg, Moshe	1887	Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Goldberg, Moshe Noakh	1888	Zirardow, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Goldberg, Yitzkhak	1900	Wilejka, Poland	Wilejka, Poland, 1941
Goldberger, Khaim	1871	Tiszaroff, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Goldenberg, Kuna		Yurkovka, Ukraine	Yurkovka, Ukraine, 1941
Goldenberg, Pinkhas	1875	Zlatopol, Ukraine	1941
Goldenberg, Yaakov Yisrael	1882	Krakow, Poland	Poland
Goldman, Ignatz		Vienna, Austria	
Goldman, Pinkhas	1907	Brilon, Germany	Warsaw, Poland, 1941
Goldman, Yaakov	1865	Brzezany, Poland	Brzezany, Poland, 1942
Goldring, Mor		Kecel, Hungary	Ukraine, 1945

Goldschlager, Benjamin	1883	Belzyce, Poland	Belzyce, Poland, 1942
Goldshmidt, Akhiezer		Uscilug, Poland	Uscilug, Poland
Goldstein, Adolf	1890	Berettyoujfalu, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Goldstein, Jakob		Warsaw, Poland	
Goldwasser, Aharon		Lodz, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Goltzman, David		Warcovicze, Poland	Warcovicze, Poland, 1942
Gorokhovskiy-Shneerson, Meir		Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine
Goss, Shaul		Warsaw, Poland	
Gossmann, Ismar	1887	Gleiwitz, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Gotlib, Menahem Emanuel		Zalau, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Gotlib,			
Gotlib, Moshe Efraim	1878	Lublin, Poland	
Gotlib, Shlomo	1890	Lvov, Poland	Lvov, Poland, 1942
Gotlib, Yehoshua	1894	Banovce, Slovakia	1942
Gotlib, Yehoshua Eliezer	1882	Lublin, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Gotlieb, Moshe Efraim	1880	Nowy Sacz, Poland	Nowy Sacz, Poland, 1942
Gotlob, Moshe	1885		Odessa, Ukraine, 1942
Gotovizna, Mordekhai		Zwolen, Poland	Zwolen, Poland, 1942
Gotshal, Andor	1907	Banska, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Govetz, Michel		Amsterdam, Holland	
Grabowski, Yosef	1914	Gleiwitz, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Grad, Yosef	1895	Drohobycz, Poland	
Granat, Asher Tzvi	1879	Raciaz, Poland	Dratow, Poland, 1941
Grauer, Shlomo	1889	Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Greis, Barukh		Drohobycz, Poland	
Griya, Moshe		Terebovlyz, Ukraine	Terebovlyz, Ukraine, 1941
Grin, Leib	1890	Stanislaw, Poland	Stanislaw, Poland, 1943
Grin, Zalman	1894	Krakow, Poland	Krakow, Poland
Grinbal, Elimelekh Shimon		Ludomir, Poland	
Grinbaum, Avraham	1890	Banska, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Grinberg, Moshe		Balti, Romania	
Grinberg, Natan	1880	Grojec, Poland	
Grinblat, Benzion	1879	Falesi, Bessarabia	Bessarabia, Romania, 1941
Gringlas, Yoel	1875	Biala D'lita, Poland	Biala Podlaska, Poland
Grinhut, Tibor		Hungary	1944
Grinshtein, David		Tabor, Bohemia	
Grinvald, Izidor	1904	Soroksar, Hungary	
Gros, Khaim	1885	Moraska Ostrava, Cz.	Theresienstadt, Czech., 1943
Gosman, Khaim	1880	Trencin, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Grobsztein, Yaakov	1895	Lutzk, Poland	
Groenstad, Eleazar	1925	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Groisman, Shaye		Kishinev, Bessarabia	
Grosman, Yosef	1909	Felsobisztra, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Gros,		Uhlja, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Gros, Hersh	1896	Notkanizan, Hungary	Notkanizan, Hungary, 1943
Grosman, Bunem Simkha		Lipno, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Grosman, Khaim	1880	Trencin, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Grosman, Yosef	1909	Felsobisztra, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944

Gross, Izidor	1860	Karlovac, Yugoslavia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1942
Gross, Khaim	1885	Moravska Ostrava, Cz.	Theresienstadt, Czech., 1943
Gross, Khaim Yehuda		Aszod, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Gross, Sigi	1909		
Grosser, Shmuel	1890	Tarnow, Poland	Tarnow, Poland, 1941
Gross Taub, Shimshon	1898	Zadne, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Grosz, Aleksander Sandor	1875	Vac, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Grosz, Vilmosh Zev	1900	Paks, Hungary	Valdager, Bavaria, 1945
Grosz, Zeev Benjamin	1900	Puck, Poland	Germany, 1945
Grubin, Aharon	1881	Kerch, Russia	Kerch, Russia, 1941
Gruen, Lipa	1910	Neresnica, Czech.	Mathausen, Austria
Gruenfeld, Yekutiel	1886	Sobrance, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Gruenwald, Arthur	1902	Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland
Gruenwald, Izidor	1904	Koka, Hungary	1944
Grubin, Aharon	1881	Kerch, Russia	Kerch, Russia, 1941
Grun, Faivel	1905	Ujhely, Slovakia	Lublin, Poland, 1942
Grun, Reuven	1881	Bitola, Yugoslavia	1943
Grunberger, Barukh	1910	Budszent Mihaly, Hung.	Ukraine, 1943
Gugik, Volf Leib	1860	Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Gurevitz, Avraham	1914		Riga, Latvia, 1941
Gurfinkel, Avraham	1887	Secureni, Bessarabia	Secureni, Bessarabia, 1942
Gurfinkel, Levi	1898	Briceni, Bessarabia	Ataki, Bessarabia, 1941
Gurfinkel, Moshe	1906	NovogradVolynski, Ukr.	NovogradVolynski, Ukr., 1941
Gurman, Gedalyah		Czernowitz, Bukovina	Czernowitz, Bukovina, 1941
Gutman, Mendel		Zakopane, Poland	
Gutverk, Moshe		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Gutvirt, Pinkhas		Lvov, Poland	
Gwillmann, Hermann	1900		Dachau, Germany, 1939

H

Haas, Avraham	1885	Rymanow, Poland	Rymanow, Poland
Haas, Moshe		Jaroslow, Poland	Jaroslaw, Poland, 1942
Haber, Yaakov		Budapest, Hungary	
Hafner, Luzer	1880	Zwolin, Poland	
Hafner, Yitzkhak		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Haaker, Isak	1926	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Halbershtat, Tzvi	1890	Zaklikow, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Halmos, Mor	1900	Dresden, Germany	Poland, 1944
Halperin, Yitzkhak	1890		
Halpern, Meir	1907	Lvov, Poland	1942
Halpern, Shalom		Konstanz, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland
Halpern, Yitzkhak		Zamosc, Poland	
Harar, Zisha		Lvov, Poland	
Harendorf, Moshe Pinkhas	1884	Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland
Hartman, Khaim Zev	1896	Mezobereny, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Hashochet, Yoel	1895	Stepan, Poland	Karatchobye, Poland, 1942
Hechter, Shmuel	1912	Pomorzany, Poland	

Heertjes, Simon	1919	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Heida, Yehuda	1893	Bedzin, Poland	Zaglebie, Poland , 1942
Heidenfeld, Yisaskhar Dov	1876	Rybnick, Germany	Theresienstadt, Czech., 1942
Heijmans, David	1923	Groenlo, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Heilbraun, Moritz Moshe		Cadca, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Heilbraun, Samuel	1885	Leva, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1941
Heilbrun, Moshe	1882	Levice, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland
Heilbrun, Shmuel	1887	Catcau, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland
Hekker, Aharon		Kowno, Lithuania	
Helfgott, Kalman		Beodra, Yugoslavia	Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 1941
Helfman, Yosef	1873	Oswiecim, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Helman, Avraham	1900	Berdichev, Ukraine	Berdichev, Ukraine, 1942
Helman, Yitzkhak	1871	Prievidza, Slovakia	1942
Helmann, Abram	1892	Nikolsburg, Moravia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Hendel,	1883	Zagreb, Yugoslavia	
Herczl, Moshe Khaim	1895	Uszod, Hungary	Birkenau, Poland, 1944
Herer, Mendel Menakhem		Sighet, Romania	Auschwitz, 1944
Herer, Zishe	1885	Lvov, Poland	Lvov, Poland, 1943
Herman, Yosef	1910	Brno, Moravia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Hershaft, Hillel		Tarnopol, Poland	Tarnopol, Poland
Hershenfus, Shimon		Warsaw, Poland	Poland
Hershkovitz, Izidor		Vinkovci, Yugoslavia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1942
Hershkovitz, Moshe		Stara Pazova, Yugos.	Jasenovac, Yugos., 1942
Hershkovitz, Yitzkhak	1870	Romania	
Hershman, Zakharia	1900	Lublin, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Herskovitz, David	1880	Dombovar, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Herskovitz, Samuel	1883	Hannover, Germany	Birkenau, Poland, 1944
Herskovitz, Shlomo Shabtai	1882	Kezmerok, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Hertzberg, Yosef Hillel		Dresden, Germany	Lublin, Poland
Hertzman, Yisrael		Palanga, Lithuania	Linkova, Lithuania, 1941
Herzl, Yosef Hersh		Tarnobrzeg, Poland	Siberia, Russia, 1943
Herzler, Josef	1859	Djakovo, Yugoslavia	
Herzstein, Herbert	1923	Nuttlar, Germany	Mathausen, Austria, 1941
Herzog, Asher	1892	Rzesow, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Hirsch, Isidor		Maerkisch, Germany	Poland
Hochman, Hershel	1885	Stepan, Poland	Karatchobye, Poland, 1942
Hofman, Azriel		Szmulewizna, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Hofman, David	1917	Nagyszolos, Romania	Budapest, Hungary, 1943
Hoiker, Ziskind Alexander		Wloclawek, Poland	
Holtzman, Benjamin	1887	Fuerth, Bavaria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Horer, Mendel	1877		Auschwitz, 1941
Hornshtein, Yaakov Dov-Ber	1905	Budapest, Hungary	Germany, 1945
Horovitz, Berisch	1870	Visau, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Horovitz, Leiser	1867	Buczacz, Poland	Sobibor, Poland
Horovitz, Noakh	1907	Budapest, Hungary	Nagyecenk, Hungary, 1945
Horovitz, Yosef	1890	Sighet, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Hosberg, Izyk	1873	Bolechow, Poland	Bolechov, Poland, 1942

Hutt, Abraham

Wielun, Poland

I			
Iamnik, Shmuel	1872	Pszczek, Poland	Chelmno, Poland, 1942
Idelsohn, Koifman Yidel		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Idesis, Levi	1885	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland, 1941
Ielinek, Gustav	1880	Lodz, Poland	
Iliard, Meir	1924	Raciaz, Poland	Plonsk, Poland, 1942
Ilovitz, Eliyahu	1907	Berettyoujfalú, Hung.	Kiev, Ukraine, 1943
Ilovitz, Eliyahu Alia	1909	Kunmadaras, Hungary	Mathausen, Austria, 1944
Ilovitz, Zvi Meir	1886	Miskolc, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Ilyovitz, Erno Eli	1908	Kundamaras, Hungary	
Ilyovitz, Hersh Mayer	1878	Berettyoujfallu, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Iordan, Pesakh		Germany	Theresienstadt, Cz., 1941
Ioskovitz, Shlomo Menakhem	1885	Wilno, Poland	Wilno, Poland
Ires, David	1906	Koeln, Germany	Litzmannstadt, Poland, 1941
Irespira, David Anshel	1890	Koeln, Germany	Lodz, Poland
Iritzer, David	1890	Vienna, Austria	Maidanek, Poland
Iritzer, Isidor		Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Iritzter, Shlomo	1901	Zilina, Slovakia	Auschwitz, 1944
Isak, Ezra		Belgium	1942
Itkovitz, Shaia Pesakh			
Itkovitz, Slomo Tzvi Hirsh	1890	Jassi, Romania	
Iuftaru, Yosef Efraim	1925	Dorohoi, Moldavia	Dorohoi, Moldavia, 1940
Izbitzki Avraham Lemel	1902	Janowiec, Poland	Chelmno, Poland

J			
Jackel, Siegmund	1877	Kassel, Germany	Theresienstadt, Cz., 1943
Jacob, Joseph	1868	Ludwigshafen, Bavaria	1942
Jacobowitz, Menachem		Antwerp, Belgium	1942
Jacobs, Frits	1917	Zandvoort, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Jacobs, Uri	1922	Hengelo, Holland	Mathausen, Austria, 1941
Jaffe, Max Mordekhai	1885	Leipzig, Germany	Poland, 1942
Jeger, Natan		Radom, Poland	
Jellinek, Siegmund	1857	Oberhallabrunn, Aust.	Theresienstadt, Cz., 1943
Joffe, Yaakov	1904	Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia, 1941
Jospe, Georg	1885	Berlin, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Just, Joshua	1880	Brzozow, Poland	1942

K			
Kabili, Avraham		Kabala, Macedonia	Danube River, 1943
Kachka, Gershon	1893	Zemun, Yugoslavia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia
Kaczka, Gerszon		Kalisz, Poland	Czechoslovakia
Kaczka, Josef		Kalisz, Poland	Debrecen, Hungary

Kagan, Shimon	1882	Krzemieniec, Poland	1942
Kagan, Yitzkhak	1890	Zdzieciol, Poland	Zdzieciol, Poland, 1941
Kahana, Herman	1888	Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Kahn, Karl	1890	Heilbronn, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland
Kahn, Lavoslav		Zagreb, Croatia	Zagreb, Croatia, 1941
Kalinski, Yitzkhak	1870	Orgeyev, Bessarabia	Orgeyev, Bessarabia, 1941
Kaller, Yitzkhak Peretz	1894	Tarnow, Poland	Tarnow, Poland, 1943
Kallmann, Max	1896	Berlin, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Kalmanovitz, Betzalel		Krakiai, Lithuania	
Kamin, Menashe	1905	Rozyszcze, Poland	Rozyszcze, Poland
Kaminski, Khanina		Naszelsk, Poland	Majdanek, Poland
Kamirunski, Yitzkhak	1899	Ponevezh, Lithuania	Ponevezh, Lithuania, 1941
Katchener, Yossele		Ger, Poland	Poland, 1942
Kanterovitz, Yitzkhak	1880	Danzig, Poland	Danzig, Poland, 1939
Kantor, Shmuel	1896	Czernowitz, Bukovina	Transnistria, Ukraine
Kantorovitz, Zalman	1883	Suwalki, Poland	Dereczyn, Poland, 1942
Kaplan, Beniamin		Bereznik, Russia	
Kaplan, Shimon		Piesk, Poland	Piesk, Poland
Kaplan, Tzvi Hirsh	1870	Radviliskis, Lithuania	1942
Kaplun, Aizik Khaim	1880	Khmelnik, Ukraine	Khmelnik, Ukraine, 1941
Kaprow, Yaakov		Sokolovka, Ukraine	Sokolovka, Ukraine
Karocher, Yehezkel		Sucha Wola, Poland	
Karpel, Mordekhai	1876	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland
Karpfen, Khaim Yaakov	1895	Patohaza, Romania	Germany, 1945
Karpnik, Yosef	1887	Szedlec, Poland	Szedlec, Poland, 1939
Kasorla, Salamon	1879	Bitolj, Serbia	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Kater, Jacob	1919	Hilversum, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Kats, Barukh		Czernowitz, Bukovina	Transnistria, Ukraine, 1941
Katz, Barukh	1915		1945
Katz, Emil		Dunavecse, Hungary	1944
Katz, Leopold		Cerevic, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Katz, Mordechai Markos		Krzemieniec, Poland	Riga, Latvia, 1941
Katz, Shaul	1893	Napkor, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Katz, Shmuel Shaia	1877	Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine, 1942
Katz, Yitzkhak Yehuda Leib	1881	Siauliai, Lithuania	Telz, Lithuania
Katz, Yosef	1893	Visznice, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland
Katzberg, Moshe Khil	1915	Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Katzev,	1895	Riga, Latvia	
Katzev, Yakov Tzemakh	1892	Druya, Poland	Druya, Poland, 1942
Katzman, David		Lvov, Poland	
Kaufman, Shmuel	1890	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Kaufman, Shmuel Arie	1892	Krakow, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Kaufman, Yisrael Shmuel	1892	Vrable, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Kaufmann, Fernand		Strasbourg, France	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Kaver,	1909	Wolomin, Poland	
Kavnatski, Hillel	1869	Kalinindorf, Ukraine	Kalinindorf, Ukraine, 1941
Keidansky, Khaim Shimshon	1885	Kolno, Poland	Kolno, Poland, 1941

Keller, Hirsh Yaakov	1894	Leipzig, Germany	Auschwitz, 1943
Kellerman, Jakob	1894	Duisburg, Germany	1941
Kemelmakher,		Koryc, Poland	Kozak, Poland, 1942
Kemin, Khaim Shlomo	1876	Lubicz, Poland	
Kertesz, Yosef		Sepsiszentgyorgy, Rom.	
Khaleva, H. Y.		Czenstochov, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Khalfon, Yisrael	1867	Marculesti, Bessarabia	Marculesti, Bessarabia
Khason, Avraham	1883	Bitolj, Yugoslavia	
Kheim, Shmuel	1914	Corfu, Greece	
Khimovitz, Khaim		Rishkan, Bessarabia	
Khudin, Yaakov Eliezer			Bialystok, Poland, 1942
Khusid, Moisha		Dyatlovo, Poland	Grodno, Poland, 1942
Kidanski, Zeev	1900	Butrimonys, Lithuania	Alitus, Lithuania, 1941
Kimelman, Hirsh Meir	1904	Mannheim, Germany	Fuenfteichen, Germany, 1944
Kinstler, Betsalel		Lvov, Poland	
Kiperman, Avraham		Mizocz, Poland	
Kipnis, Khaim Leib		Ushomir, Ukraine	Korosten, Ukraine, 1941
Kipnis, Menakhem		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Kirschner, Avraham	1870	Berlin, Germany	
Kirschner, Emanuel	1857	Munich, Bavaria	Munich, Bavaria, 1938
Kirzhner, Aharon	1897	Kamin Kashirsky, Pol.	
Kishiniovski, Khaim	1900	Kishinev, Bessarabia	1941
Kiv, Moshe	1865	Voznesensk, Ukraine	
Klagswald, Moshe	1906	Bedzin, Poland	Bedzin, Poland, 1942
Klar, Chamal	1895	Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Kle, Yitzkhak		Poprad, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Kleerekoper, Baruch	1912	Harlingen, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Klef, Moshe		Yugoslavia	
Klein, Benjamin Zeev	1920	Ungvar, Czech.	Bory, Moravia
Klein, David	1900	Ungvar, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Klein, David	1888	Vienna, Austria	
Klein, Eliyahu Natan		Ujpest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Klein, Marcus	1873	Amsterdam, Holland	Groningen, Holland, 1942
Klein, Meinhert	1882	Pancevo, Yugoslavia	Hungary, 1944
Klein, Moshe	1898	Tokaj, Hungary	1944
Klein, Moshe Leib	1882	Topocani, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Klein, Moshe Leib	1902		Poland, 1942
Klein, Moshe Tzvi	1886	Ungvar, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland 1944
Klein, Munis	1890	Majdanka, Czech.	Ungvar, Czech., 1945
Klein, Shimon		Senica, Slovakia	
Kleiner, Pinkhas	1868	Akerman, Bessarabia	Bessarabia, Romania, 1942
Kleinfeld, Yaakov Tuvia	1875	Sosnowiec, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Kleinman, Dov	1870	Miedzyrzec, Poland	Miedzyrzec, Poland
Kleinstein Khaim	1893	Szumsk, Poland	Szumsk, Poland, 1941
Kliger, David		Wlodimierz, Poland	
Kliger, Josef	1880	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1942
Kliger, Yosef	1908	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1941

Kligman, Meir		Dunayevtsy, Ukraine	Solonynychik, 1942
Kleinshtern, Menashe	1890	Włodzimierz, Poland	Włodzimierz, Poland, 1942
Klinkovstein, Jakov		Sisak, Croatia	Sisak, Croatia, 1941
Klishevan, Nahum		Calarasi Targ, Romania	1941
Knopf, Sinai	1890	Antwerp, Belgium	Antwerp, Belgium, 1942
Knopf, Yitzkhak Sinai	1902	Antwerp, Belgium	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Kober, Moshe	1898	Dortmund, Germany	Dortmund, Germany, 1941
Kober, Shmuel	1865	Lissa, Poland	
Kodriansky, Zeydl Leyb Yosif		Kiev, Ukraine	Babi Yar, Ukraine, 1941
Kofman, Khaim Yitzkhak		Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Kogan, Avraham		Kraysk, Belarus	Borisov, Belarus, 1941
Kohen, Yaakov	1880	Varazdin, Yugoslavia	
Kohen, Yaakov Moshe		Tiktin, Poland	Lopuchowo, Poland, 1941
Kohen, Yitzkhak	1868	Bitola, Yugoslavia	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Kohen, Yosef	1876	Sarajevo, Bosnia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1941
Kohn, Jakob		Varazdin, Croatia	Varazdin, Croatia, 1941
Kohn, Lajosz	1916	Soltvadkerz, Hungary	
Kohn, Leib Lipot	1906	Budapest, Hungary	Ukraine, 1942
Kohn, Mano	1904	Mezokovesd, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Kohn, N.		Banja Luka, Croatia	Banja Luka, Croatia, 1941
Kohn, Shmuel		Budapest, Hungary	
Kojler, Berko Dov		Krzemieniec, Poland	
Kolb,		Pesterzsebet, Hungary	1944
Kolker, Filip		Czechoslovakia	Poland
Komoroski, Rhinehart		Minsk, Belarus	Auschwitz, Poland
Kontzentz, Meir Khil	1900		
Konviseris, Khaim Zeev	1890	Mariampole, Poland	Mariampole, Poland, 1943
Kordonski, Shlomo Yitzkhak	1870	Romanovca, Romania	Romanovca, Romania, 1941
Koretzki, Yaakov	1912	Korzce, Poland	Korzce, Poland
Korman, Pinkhas		Poland	
Korner, Faiwisch	1886	Czernowitz, Bukovina	Mogilev, Belarus, 1941
Kosover, Yosef	1895	Wilno, Poland	Wilno, Poland, 1942
Kotler, Yitzkhak		Yedenitz, Romania	Ukraine, 1941
Kovilia, Henrick	1876	Turzovka, Slovakia	1940
Koviliak, Khanokh	1876	Halic, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Kowalski, Leib	1888	Grodno, Poland	
Kozlowsky, Hillel		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Kozminski, Yehuda	1893	Hildesheim, Germany	Warsaw, Poland
Kramer, Ovadia	1908	Lutzk, Poland	
Krammwer, David,	1862	Coevorden, Holland	
Krankurs, Eliyahu Eli	1888	Kishinev, Bessarabia	Transnistria, Ukraine, 1941
Krapiwski, Yisrael	1871	Odessa, Ukraine	Transnistria, Ukraine
Krasniansky, Mordekhai	1868	Nitra, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Kratka, Yekhiel Meir	1896	Warsaw, Poland	Lublin, Poland, 1943
Kraus, Jenö Yehuda	1913	Novi Sad, Yugoslavia	Russia, 1943
Kraus, Moshe Moiz		Kloczew, Poland	1945
Krausz, Jakob	1869	Budapest, Hungary	1945

Krausz, Yaakov Eugen	1910	Czechoslovakia	Buchenwald, Germany,
Kreizer, Levi Yitzkhak	1880	Stepan, Poland	Karatchobye, Poland, 1942
Kremen, Solomon	1878	Yevpatoriya, Russia	Yevpatoriya, Russia, 1943
Kremer, Ovadia	1908	Lukow, Poland	
Krivoj, Hennakh		Kowno, Lithuania	Dachau, Germany
Krois, Jakob Eliezer	1869	Budapest	Budapest, 1945
Krupnik, Moshe	1877	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1941
Krupnik, Moshe	1882	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland, 1943
Kshepitzki, Moshe	1892	Zarki, Poland	
Kukiolka, Moshe	1895	Jendzejow, Poland	Poland, 1943
Kul, Nekhemia	1914		Ukraine, 1942
Kula, Yisrael Yehuda	1883	Kobrin, Poland	Kobrin, 1943
Kun, Beno		Bekescsaba, Hungary	Budapest, Hungary
Kunda, Beinish	1866	Kursk, Russia	Kursk, Russia, 1941
Kunstadt, Yosef	1887	Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Kuperman, Dov	1890	Mogilev, Ukraine	Beltz, Bessarabia
Kupershmid, Shmuel	1881	Male Sdliszczce, Poland	
Kupershtok, Gershon	1885	Michaliszki, Poland	Janischki, Lithuania
Kurzweil, Moshe	1874	Treutchtlingen, Bavaria	Theresienstadt, Czech., 1942
Kutzik, Mordechai		Kowel, Poland	Kowel, Poland, 1941
Kuzminski, Leo Yehuda	1893	Hildesheim, Germany	Warsaw, Poland

L			
Lachotzki, Herbert	1920	Berlin, Germany	Kowno, Lithuania
Lahis, Barukh Mordekhai	1870	Budapest, Hungary	Budapest, Hungary
Lahis, Haim Manish	1863	Czortkow, Poland	Czortkow, Poland, 1941
Lakser, Nakhman	1890	Czernowitz, Romania	Obodovka, Ukraine, 1941
Lam, Menakhem	1880	Jaroslaw, Poland	Jaroslaw, Poland, 1942
Lam, Meshulam	1890	Jaroslaw, Poland	Jaroslaw, Poland, 1942
Lamm, Yulius		Frankfurt amMain, Ger.	Treblinka, Poland, 1939
Lampin, Simcha Binim	1868	Krynica, Poland	Krynica, Poland
Landau, Benjamin	1873	Gablonz, Bohemia	Birkenau, Poland, 1943
Landau, Hertz	1892	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland
Landau, Hertz		Klodawa, Poland	Chelmno, Poland, 1942
Landau, Khaim Shmuel	1901	Slovakia	1943
Landau, Menakhem Mendel	1861	Klodawa, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1941
Landau, Moshe Naftali Herzke	1893	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Lanski, Avraham		Marijampole, Lithuania	Marijampole, Lith., 1941
Lansky, Shmaryahu	1870	Mozyr, Belarus	Daeidgrodek, Poland, 1941
Laub, Eliezer		Vienna, Austria	Yugoslavia, 1942
Lazar, Aharon	1891	Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Lazarus, Toni	1893	Kottbus, Germany	Litzmannstadt, Poland
Lazovsky, Shmuel	1874	Hamburg, Germany	Riga, Latvia, 1941
Leboerchen, Bernard	1925	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Lebovitz, Natan	1911	Ocsa, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Lebovitz, Yosef	1904	Iza, Czechoslovakia	Birkenau, Poland

Lederberg,		Antwerp, Belgium	
Leefsma, Khaim	1885	Hengelo, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland
Lefkowitz, Avraham	1885	Nadudvar, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Lefkovitz, Erno	1912	Csorna, Hungary	Mathausen, Austria, 1944
Lefkovitz, Ilan	1906	Kralovsky, Czech.	Poland, 1944
Lehmann, Theodor		Reichshoffen, France	Auschwitz, Poland
Leib, Shmuel Dov	1898	Cluj, Romania	1944
Leibel, Jonah	1903	Brussels, Belgium	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Leibovitz, Beniamin	1904	Borsa, Romania	Targu, Moldavia, 1944
Leibovitz, Yosef		Horincovo, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Leibwohl, Yehuda	1902	Chirow, Poland	
Leikhter, Yitzkhak	1886	Sosnowic, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Leimsider, Geza	1895	Nagyvarad, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Leiter, Zeev	1907	Trembowla, Poland	Lvov, Poland, 1942
Lejbyszes, Tuvia	1907	Wlodzimierz, Poland	
Lelgant, Khaim	1886	Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine, 1941
Lemberger, Yosef	1895	Chrzanow, Poland	1943
Lemky, Yehoshua	1853	Courland, Latvia	Berlin, Germany, 1942
Lemler, Bernhard	1890	Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Len, Khaim		Slabodka, Poland	Slabodka, Poland, 1940
Lerner, Khayim		Bukovina, Romania	
Lerner, Khaim	1882	Storozenice, Bukovina	Bershad, Ukraine, 1941
Lesch, Avraham	1884	Taurage, Lithuania	Savli, Lithuania, 1941
Lev, David	1896	TG Mures, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Lever, Benedictus	1923	Amsterdam, Holland	Amsterdam, Holland, 1943
Levi, Avraam		Thessaloniki, Macedon.	
Levi, Beniamino Ugo	1895	Venice, Italy	Germany
Levi, Moshe	1890	Corfu, Greece	
Levi, Salomon	1874	Vienna, Austria	Riga, Latvia, 1942
Levi, Yehuda Leib	1905	Pressburg, Slovakia	Germany
Levin, Alter		Luniniec, Poland	Luniniec, Poland, 1942
Levin Hersh	1912	Pabjanice, Poland	1940
Levin, Volf	1870	Lugansk, Ukraine	1942
Levin, Yehezkel	1895	Vilnius, Lithuania	Ponary, Lithuania, 1943
Levinson, Beinsh	1901	Jurburg, Lithuania	Lazdai, Lithuania, 1941
Levovitz, Dov		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Lewenkopf, Felix	1885	Paris, France	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Libeskind, Avraham	1900	Przedborz, Poland	
Libovitz, Yehuda Arie	1880	Jassy, Romania	Mircesti, Romania, 1944
Libshon, Yaakov	1898	Koziany, Poland	Koziany, Poland, 1942
Licht, Baruch Schaul			Plaszow, Poland, 1943
Lichtenstein, Arthur	1882	Breslav, Poland	Theresienstadt, Cz., 1942
Lichtenstein, Leib		Groningen, Holland	
Lichtensztein, Mordechai Eli	1870	Cemernik, Poland	Cemernik, Poland, 1943
Lichterman, Jakob		Warsaw, Poland	
Lieberman, Wolf		Drohobych, Ukraine	Drohobych, Ukraine, 1941
Liebermensch, Samuel	1886	Mannheim, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944

Liebeskind, Abram	1907	Przedborz, Poland	
Liemde, Herman Isidor	1905	Hertogenbosch, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Lifshitz, Yaakov	1897	Lodz, Poland	
Likhtenshtein, Artur Yisrael	1886	Breslau, Germany	
Likhtenshtein, Yerakhmiel			
Likhter, Yitzkhak		Sosnowice, Poland	Sauschwitz, Poland
Likhtman, Dov	1870	Ostrog, Poland	Ostrog, Poland, 1941
Liling, Shimon	1872	Sahy, Czechoslovakia	1944
Linden,	1882	Radomsko, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Linkovski, Yaakov	1886	Bielsko, Poland	Tarnow, Poland, 1942
Lisauer, David	1894	Michalovce, Czech.	
Loewy, Moritz	1881	Ostrava, Moravia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
London, Emil	1909	Hejocsaba, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Lorjan, Armin		Rakosliget, Hungary	Morshansk, Russia, 1943
Lotringer, Nachmin	1854	Lvov, Poland	Kamionka, Poland, 1942
Luftshein, Shlomo	1908	Stanislaw, Poland	Stanislaw, Poland, 1941
Lurie, David		Kowno, Lithuania	
Lutzki, Mikhael	1888	Lomza, Poland	Czerwony, Poland, 1941
Lvovitz, Berele		Lvov, Poland	

M

Magid, Yaakov	1889	Yablonna, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Maharshak, Yisrael	1873	Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia, 1943
Mamluk, Shimon		Bad Karlsruhe, Ger.	
Mandel, Eugen		Zagreb, Croatia	Zagreb, Croatia, 1941
Mandel, Herman Tzvi	1893	Kisvarda, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Mandelbaum, Markus Hirsh	1893	Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Mandelbaum, Mordekhai	1904	Vienna, Austria	Theresienstadt, Czech.
Mandelblat, Tzalik	1893	Chilia, Romania	1943
Manukowski, Emil	1929	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Margolis, Shlomo	1887	Janova, Lithuania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Marcus, Shlomo	1873	Hamburg, Germany	Litzmannstadt, Poland
Margolis, Gerhon		Vienna, Austria	
Margolis, Shlomo	1887	Janova, Lithuania	Janova, Lithuania, 1942
Margulit, Avraham	1892	Bukovina, Romania	Czernowitz, Bukovina, 1941
Mark, Abraham		Czernowitz, Bukovina	Czernowitz, Bukovina, 1941
Markeninya, Shmuel		Lubavichi, Russia	Lyubavichi, Russia, 1942
Markman, Elchanan	1893	Parafinov, Poland	Parafinov, Poland, 1942
Markovitz, Benzion	1912	Beclean, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Marmorstein, Arpad	1906	Prostejov, Moravia	Baranovich, Poland, 1942
Marmorstein, Avraham	1908	Zilina, Slovakia	
Maroko, Yisrael Eliyahu	1896	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Mathias, Mathias		Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland,
Matushek, Hersh Leib	1920	Kalisz, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Matzger,	1871	Kamienic, Ukraine	Kamienic, Ukraine, 1942
Medowski, Moshe	1923	Kosow, Poland	Kosow, Poland, 1942

Medwed, Yitzkhak	1901	Dubno, Poland	
Meisl, Walter	1900		Dachau, Bavaria, 1945
Meizler, Shlomo	1895	Czestochowa, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Melamdow, Leon		Warsaw, Poland	
Melamed, Avraham		Bialystok, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Melamed, Meir	1880	Rotterdam, Holland	Poland, 1943
Melamud, Moisei	1882	Samgorodok, Ukraine	Samgorodok, Ukraine, 1942
Melkhior, Avraham	1881	Warsaw, Poland	Bergen-Belsen, Germany, 1942
Meltzer, Isaac		Horodenka, Ukraine	Horodenka, Ukraine, 1944
Mendels, Shmuel	1885	Leeuwarden, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Merling, Meshulam	1873	Gura Humora, Bukov.	Gura Humora, Bukovina, 1943
Mermelstein, Farkash	1860	Slovakia, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 194x
Mermelstein, Izidor	1916	Budapest, Hungary	Kassa, Czechoslovakia, 1944
Merzel, Moshe	1898	Tiszafured, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Messing, Majir	1880	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Mikhalowski, Jakub	1865	Holesov, Moravia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Milikovsky, Lippe	1912	Osmiany, Poland	Osmiany, Poland, 1942
Mintz, Monya	1904	Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia, 1941
Mintzeles,	1893		Lvov, Poland, 1943
Mirwis, Leo		Eichstetten, Germany	Gurs, France
Misonzhnik, Pinkhas	1873	Bendery, Romania	Odessa, Ukraine, 1941
Mitelberg, Avigdor	1868	Lodz, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Mizan, Reuven	1907	Corfu, Greece	
Molkho, Yaakov	1870	Saloniki, Macedonia	Poland, 1941
Mops, Natan	1889	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland, 1941
Mordushenko,	1885	Kiev, Ukraine	Babi Yar, Ukraine, 1941
Morel, David Meir		Riki, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Mosel, Yaakov Itzhak	1902	Gravenhege, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Moses, Jacques	1925	Antwerp, Belgium	Riesa, Germany, 1945
Moskovitz, Moshe	1910	Polana, Czech.	Germany, 1945
Moskovitz, Koppel	1870	Michalovce, Slovakia	
Mostovoi, Avram Ber	1884	Priluki, Ukraine	
Motian, Shlomo	1890	Cremenetz, Poland	
Mozes, Armin	1902	Mindszent, Hungary	Austria, 1944
Mozes, Nieweg	1925	Groningen, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Mozes, Noakh	1886	Senta, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Mudrik, Khaim David		Panemune, Lithuania	Kaunas, Lithuania
Mueller,		Sahy, Slovakia	Poland
Mueller, Abraham	1883	Munich, Bavaria	Dachau, Bavaria, 1938
Mug, Jacob	1907	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Munk, Gabriel	1892	Modra, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Musafia, Yitzkhak	1882	Zemun, Yugoslavia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia
Muszkas, Abraham Moshe		Opatow, Poland	

N

Nagel, Yosef	1914	Suchedniow, Poland	
Nagelberg, Shmuel		Vienna, Austria	Vienna, Austria
Najovitz, Khaim	1879	Sahy, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Nakhshon, Mordekhai Marko	1902	Corfu, Greece	Birkenau, Poland
Nathan, Alois		Krupina, Slovakia	Poland, 1942
Natt, Willy	1913	Giessen, Germany	Poland, 1942
Neiman, Miksha		Sighet, Romania	
Nemesh, Bernat	1890	Kispest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Nemet, Yakow	1876	Nodz Warod, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Neuhaus, Bela	1904	Poland	
Neumann, Max		Berlin, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Neustadt,		Cracow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Nihtburg, Emanuel	1904	Pancevo, Yugoslavia	Topovske, Yugoslavia, 1941
Nirenberg, Abraham	1897		Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Nirenburger, Yaakov Naftali	1888	Breslaw, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Niudovsky, Moshe	1910	Kosow, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Noiman, Shmuel Dov	1873	Pogranice, Czech.	1942
Noiman, Tzvi	1890	Poroszlo, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Nokhimovitz, Yekl	1880	Riga, Latvia	Dwinsk, Latvia, 1945
Nokhimovitz, Zelik	1905	Riga, Latvia	Russia, 1941
Norden, Aleksander	1887	Hamburg, Germany	
Novitzky, Hillel	1878	Libau, Latvia	Libau, Latvia
Nowodzielski, Moshe	1909	Tomaszow, Poland	1942
Nurnberger, Josef		Prague, Bohemia	
Nussbaum, Benno	1880	Neuss, Germany	Riga, Latvia, 1944

O

Oberman, Aharon Meir	1902	Drohycsin, Poland	
Obershmids, Rafael	1902	Suwalki, Poland	Lublin, Poland, 1942
Ochrimsky, Moshe		Wegrow, Poland	
Ogutsch, Wilhelm	1893	Essen, Germany	Theresienstadt, Czech., 1944
Oikhiziger, Eliezer	1887	Chrzanow, Poland	Auschwitz, 1942
Oliker, Menakhem	1880	Ostrozec, Poland	1942
Olivenshtein, Yehoshua	1882	Rembertow, Poland	
Olshstein, Shaye	1922	Warsaw, Poland	
Oren, Avraham	1900	Jassy, Romania	Romania, 1941
Osakovski, Pinkhas		Slonim, Poland	
Osiatinski, Leib	1878	Lipovets, Ukraine	Lipovets, Ukraine
Osterweil-Strauss, Max	1881	Prague, Bohemia	
Ostreikher, Dezzo	1908	Kaposvar, Hungary	Russia, 1943

P

Pagrach, Samuel	1912	Rijsen, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Pak, Wolf		Lvov, Poland	1942
Pakula, Ismar	1903	Bernstadt, Germany	Poland, 1943
Pakter, Mordechai	1924	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943

Paneth, Moshe Menakhem	1883	Nagyatad, Hungary	Reteg, Hungary, 1944
Papenheim, Natan	1903	Berlin, Germany	
Papo, Yaakov	1909	Sarajevo, Bosnia	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1941
Pardo, Bohor	1873	Bitola, Serbia	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Paskus, Andras	1915	Dunapentele, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Pekelman, Eli	1889	Marculesti, Bessarabia	Namangan, Uzbekistan, 1942
Pekhman, Mikhael		Buczacz, Poland	1942
Perepyotchik, Aharon			Melitopol, Ukraine
Peretz, Moshe	1895	Darsuniskis, Lithuania	Darsuniskis, Lithuania, 1942
Perl, Moshe	1885	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Perlman, Arnold Dov	1904	Budapest, Hungary	Don River, 1943
Perlman, Hersh Tzvi	1885	Stropko, Slovakia	
Perlman, Menashe Yehezkel	1882	Brigel, Poland	
Perlman, Moshe	1890	Krakow, Poland	
Perlman, Yaakov	1893	Radzin, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Perlman, Yosef	1880	Kiskunfelegyhaza, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Persky, Aharon Yaakov	1891	Ozmiana, Poland	Dachau, Bavaria, 1945
Pesakh, Shlomo Tzvi Hersh	1890	Jassy, Romania	Romania, 1941
Philipson, Isaac	1902	Hoogeveen, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Piatetzky, Tevye	1891		
Pikar, Yisrael		Vizhon, Lithuania	Vizhon, Lithuania, 1941
Pikholtz, Moshe		Zurawno, Poland	Zurawno, Poland, 1942
Pikel, Berl	1911	Chust, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Pilovnik, Noah	1890	Wilno, Poland	Wilno, Poland, 1940
Pinczewski, Yeshaya Emanuel		Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland
Pine, Shalom Yitzkhak	1885	Senta, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Pinter, Moshe		Rymanov, Poland	Rymanov, Poland, 1942
Pinter Rokakh, Mendl		Amsterdam, Holland	Amsterdam, Holland
Pitkis, Godl		Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine, 1941
Pitkovitz, Khaim	1882	Sobin, Poland	Sobin, Poland, 1942
Plachtinski, Gutman	1875	Buchen, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Pochimak, Mordekhai	1877	Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Polacco, Abramo	1870	Genova, Italy	1943
Polak, Albert	1923	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Polak, Levi	1924	Gavenhage, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Pomerantz, Khanokh	1890	Wloclawek, Poland	
Poper,	1873	Klatovy, Bohemia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Popper, Shmuel	1886	Celldomolk, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Potimik, Mordekhai	1887	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1943
Potsomok, Mordekhai	1878	Skidl, Poland	Skidl, Poland, 1942
Prager, Meir Yitzkhak	1875	Poland	
Prager, Yaakov		Aleksandrow, Poland	Poland, 1943
Premitke, Mendel	1875	Prague, Bohemia	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Pres, Yosef	1884	Hoszczka, Poland	Hoszczka, Poland, 1942
Pressman, Avraham	1875	Telenesty, Bessarabia	Telenesty, Bessarabia, 1941
Prizament,	1880	Rowne, Poland	Kostopol, Poland, 1942
Przibielski, Gad	1913	Zgerzh, Poland	Lodz, Poland

Ptashnik, Khaim Sholom

Podbrodz, Poland

Podbrodz, Poland, 1941

R

Rabi, Yosef		Amsterdam, Holland	
Rabin, Uziel		Lenowiec, Poland	Lenowiec, Poland, 1942
Rabinovitz, Avraham		Lublin, Poland	Lublin, Poland
Rabinowitz, Moshe yakov	1882	Krosniewice, Poland	
Rabinovitz, Zalman			Kowno, Lithuania
Kaunas, Lithuania			
Rachelsohn, Eliezer Mozes	1884	Remiremont, France	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Radomski, Yitzkhak	1902	Bruxelles, Belgium	Bruxelles, Belgium
Radzichovski, Shmuel	1895	Berestechko, Poland	1942
Rafael, Samuel	1887	Becej, Yugoslavia	Becej, Yugoslavia, 1942
Rapoport, Kushel	1866	Minsk, Belarus	Minsk, Belarus, 1941
Rapoport, Yankel		Kamenetz, Ukraine	Kamenetz, Ukraine, 1941
Rapoport, Yekhiel	1892	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Ratzimor, Mordekhai		Tomaszow, Poland	Belzec, Poland
Rauch, Baruch		Lesko, Poland	
Ravich,		Cluj, Romania	
Rechtgeshafiner, Avraham	1865	Poryck, Poland	Poryck, Poland, 1942
Reibel, Yehuda		Satmar, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland
Reichik, Yaakov David	1880	Zuromin, Poland	
Reif, Leibisz		Dubno, Poland	Dubno, Poland, 1943
Reikhman, Herman		Hegyesh, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Reiner, Yosef	1870	Prague, Bohemia	Theresienstadt, Czech.
Reinhartz, David	1898	Tornalya, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Reinitz, Adolf	1906	Budapest, Hungary	Russia
Reinitz, Avraham Tzvi	1875	Parkan, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Reinhold, Miki	1921	Kiskunhalas, Hungary	Ukraine, 1943
Reisel, Pinchas Volf	1881	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Resnick, Shlomo Chaim		Grajewo, Poland	Grajewo, Poland, 1941
Reznik, Yosef	1892	Krasnystaw, Ukraine	Krasnystaw, Ukraine, 1941
Ribka, Alter Benzion		Bedzin, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Riev, Mendel	1891	Grosvardein, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rima, Sender	1881	Damachava, Poland	Brzesc, Poland, 1942
Rinhartz, David	1900	Tornala, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Ritmeester, Jacob	1919	Amsterdam, Holland	Buchenwald, Germany, 1941
Rizel, Eliahu	1870	Dorohoi, Moldavia	Dorohoi, Moldavia, 1942
Roitman, Aba		Proskurov, Ukraine	Proskurov, Ukraine, 1941
Rokeach, Mendel	1906	Lvov, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rontal, Moshe	1916	Wilno, Poland	Wilno, Poland
Rosenberg, Avrum Ber	1880	Davideni, Bukovina	Transnistria, Uk., 1942
Rosenberg, Herszl	1860	Warsaw, Poland	
Rosenberg, Rafael	1895	Joniskis, Lithuania	Joniskis, Lith., 1941
Rosenblatt, Levi Yitzkhak	1885	Tarnow, Poland	Tarnow, Poland, 1942
Rosenfeld, Andor Yosef	1921	Hungary	Hidegseg, Hungary, 1944

Rosenfeld, Lipot	1900	Tiszaigar, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rosner, Mordekhai Shlomo	1901	Kiskunfelegyhaza, Hung.	Dachau, Germany, 1945
Rostovski, Gedalia	1878	Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1941
Roter, Wolf	1900	Pozarski, Poland	Pozarski, Poland, 1942
Roth, Alexander		Losice, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Roth, David	1882	Piestany, Slovakia	Opole, Poland
Roth, Eliyahu Shmuel		Vienna, Austria	France
Roth, Etya		Krakov, Poland	Tarnow, Poland
Rothfeld, Chaim Shlomo	1885	Hlohovec, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Rotman, Aharon		Koeln, Germany	
Rotman, Moshe Nekhemia		Krzywice, Poland	Krzywice, Poland
Rovenski, Yaakov		Slovakia, Czech.	Poland, 1944
Roz, Mikhael Zev		Vaiguva, Lithuania	Kelm, Lithuania, 1941
Rozenbaum, Yitzkhak	1908	Krakov, Poland	
Rozenberg, Moshe	1910	Namestovo, Slovakia	Lublin, Poland, 1942
Rozengerg, Reuven Khaim	1881	Nod Selez, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rozenberg, Shalom	1870	Rjapid, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rozenberg, Yirmiyahu		Kunow, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Rozenblum, Eliezer	1913	Sosnowic, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Rozenboim, Gabriel		Stanislaw, Poland	Germany
Rozenfeld, Abraham-Mendel			
Rozenfrukht, Khaim Shmuel	1877	Slomniki, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Rozenshtraukh,	1914	Brody, Poland	Brody, Poland, 1942
Rozentzweig, Refael		Krasnostaw, Poland	Krasnostaw, Poland, 1943
Rozmarin,		Lutsk, Poland	Lutsk, Poland, 1942
Rozner, Yehoshua		Znojmo, Czech.	
Rubel, Yehuda	1889	Satmar, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rubin,		Bedzin, Poland	
Rubin, Moshe	1890	Lowicz, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1943
Rubinshtein, Gedaliahu	1884	Warsaw, Poland	
Rubinstein, Mordekhai Shalom	1896	Wloclawek, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Rubinstein, Yehuda		Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia
Rubinstein, Yosef Shlomo		Riga, Latvia	Riga, Latvia
Rubinsky, Yisrael Moshe		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Ruda, Mendel	1875	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Rudeski,		Poland	
Rudnitzk, Yisrael Moshe	1901	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Rudoler, Avraham		Sosnowiec, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Rup, Isak		Vrbove, Czech.	
Rup, Yitzkhak Aizik	1912	Maehrisch Ostrau, Cz.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rup, Yosef	1880	Munkacs, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Rut, David	1885	Nyirabrany, Hungary	1944
Rut, Shimon	1871	Kamionka, Poland	Kamionka, Poland
Rot, Tzvi		Debeljaca, Yugoslavia	Sajmiste, Croatia
Ryf, Emanuel	1876	Grosvardein, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Ryf, Yitzkhak	1900	Grosvardein, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944

S			
Sabur, Menachem	1892	Sighet, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Sacerdoti Coen, Eugenio	1880	Padova, Italy	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Safian, Josef	1868	Krzemieniec, Poland	
Safir, Gustav	1891	Haigerloch, Germany	Riga, Latvia
Salomons, Alexander	1892	Nymegen, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland
Salzmann, Yitzkhak Eduard	1878	Dresden, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Samarian, Nakhum		Bendery, Romania	1944
Samolski, Yitzkhak		Danzig, Poland	Majdanek, Poland
Samuel, Izidor	1883	Szarvas, Hungary	Austria, 1945
Sandler, Shaul	1861	Polona, Ukraine	Polona, Ukraine, 1941
Sapir, Aron	1912	Warsaw, Poland	
Sapozhnik, Mikhal			Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Savranski, Mikhail	1880	Golovanivsk, Ukraine	Golovanivsk, Ukraine, 1941
Schacher, Georg Hermann		Erfurt, Germany	Theresienstadt, Czech., 1941
Schachter, Zeev Mordechai	1888	Krakow, Poland	
Schaefer, Georg	1870	Berlin, Germany	
Schapira, Chune	1897	Wisznewe, Poland	Wisznewe, Poland, 1942
Schapiro, Yehuda Leib	1882	Przasnyz, Poland	Anikst, Lithuania, 1942
Scharf, Isidor	1910	Sopron, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Scharf, Lajos	1889	Mezokovesd, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Scheikes, Daniel	1875	Sierpc, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Schlafit, Hrsz Tzvi	1916	Lvov, Poland	
Schlesinger, Elias	1879	Pered, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Schlesinger, Shalom Hersh	1890	Telegd, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schmalzbach, Leon	1882	Hechingen, Germany	Riga, Latvia, 1942
Schmidt, Joseph	1902	Berlin, Germany	Gyrenbad, Switz., 1942
Schmidt, Khaim	1888		
Schmidt, Yitzkhak	1884	Prague, Bohemia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schmidt, Yoseph		Chernovitzy, Rom.	
Schneider, Meir		Bircza, Poland	
Schoenfeld, Yeshiahu Khaim	1913	Ruthenia, Czech.	Kamionka, Poland
Schor, Wolf Mordekhai	1866	Lvov, Poland	Lvov, Poland
Schreiber, Akiva	1884	Berlin, Germany	Pszemesz, Poland
Schreiber, Yisrael Zeev	1889	Hlohovec, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schwartz, Aron Moshe	1870	Sered, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schwartz, Boruch Mordechai		Miskolc, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schwartz, Yosef Hersh	1872	Szamosujvar, Rom.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schwartz, Lipot	1894	Baja, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schwartz, Sandor	1924	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1945
Schwartz, Yaakov Sandor	1893	Albertirsa, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Schwarzchild, Yitzkhak Yisrael	1896		Lithuania, 1941
Seckbach, Simon	1877	Berlin, Germany	
Segal, Aharon	1910	Poland	Grodno, Poland
Seidenfeld-Singer, Josef	1888	Przemsyl, Poland	Przemsyl, Poland, 1943
Seife, Boris		Berlin, Germany	Jasenovac, Yugoslavia, 1942

Seyffers,		Apeldoorn, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland
Shachnovitz, Shlomo		Yurburg, Lithuania	Yurburg, Lithuania, 1941
Shafir, Herman	1899	Hildesheim, Germany	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Shafran, Shlomo Zalman	1902	Balasagyarmat, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland
Shalit, Hershel	1882	Kishinev, Bessarabia	1941
Shames, Itchie		Bobowa, Poland	
Shames, Motyl	1900	Sokoly, Poland	Sokoly, Poland, 1942
Shapira, Shimon Meir	1878	Prague, Bohemia	Poland, 1942
Shapiro, Hirsch Tzvi		Rakow, Poland	Rakow, Poland
Shapiro, Yitzkhak	1879		Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Shargorodski, David	1893	Kirovograd, Ukraine	Kirovograd, Ukraine, 1941
Shatz, David Leibusz	1900	France	
Shatz, Karpul			Lazdei, Lithuania, 1941
Shaulski, Leib		Gaysin, Ukraine	Gaysin, Ukraine, 1941
Shchekach, Eliezer	1929	Lodz, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Shchekach, Hersh Khanokh	1897	Lodz, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Sheftelovitz, Yisrael		Breslau, Germany	
Shein, Yosef	1882	Lvov, Poland	1942
Shekhor, Yoel		Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland
Shekhter,		Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Shekhter, Mordekhai		Bircza, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Shakhter, Nakhum	1875	Korzec, Poland	Korzec, Poland, 1942
Shekhter, Tzvi	1896	Skalat, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1943
Shekhtman, Moshe	1890	Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine
Shenker, David	1884	Kowel, Poland	Kowel, Poland, 1941
Shenker, Volf Zeev	1881	Kowel, Poland	Kowel, Poland, 1941
Sher, Yehuda Leib	1903		
Sherman, Pinkhas	1887	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Shertz, Shlomo		Wilno, Poland	
Shifer, Pinkhas	1900	Krakow, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Shifman, Shlomo		Buczacz, Poland	Buczacz, Poland
Shilder, Pinkhas	1900	Rowne, Poland	Rowne, Poland, 1941
Shinkman, Eliezer	1903	Vilkomir, Lithuania	
Shirman, Moisei	1875	Makeyevka, Ukraine	Stalino, Ukraine, 1941
Shlag, Shabtai		Lodz, Poland	Krakow, Poland
Shlezinger, Joseph		Hungary	
Shlezinger, Shmuel	1900		Transnistria, Ukraine, 1944
Shlomovitz, Eliezer Mordekhai	1896	Zvolen, Slovakia	Theresienstadt, Czech, 1941
Shlomovitz, Moshe	1878	Szabadhidveg, Hung.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Shmaia, Yehuda Leib	1889	Bielsko, Poland	Bochnia, PolandShmeltzer,
Yaakov	1880	Nasice, Yugoslavia	Jasenovac, Croatia
Shmid,	1885	Pinsk, Poland	Pinsk, Poland
Shomri, Aharon	1914	Ozarkov, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Shpasser, Hermann	1887	Sombor, Yugoslavia	Bavaria, Germany, 1945
Shpasser, Yaakov	1893	Sombor, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Shpiegel, Mikhael		Budapest, Hungary	
Shpigel, Herman	1902	Sid, Yugoslavia	

Shpindel, Pinchas	1867	Grudek, Poland	Grudek, Poland, 1942
Shpitz, David	1891	Berlin, Germany	Budapest, Hungary, 1944
Shreiber, Yosef		Kassa, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Shtark, Avraham	1906		Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Shtarkman, Benzion		Kamenetz, Ukraine	Kamenetz, Ukraine, 1943
Shtein, Bernat		Isaszeg, Hungary	Ukraine
Shtein, Dodek Geza			
Shtein, Dov Berele	1903		1942
Shtein, Yehuda		Transylvania, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland
Shteinberger, Yisrael Moshe	1902	Bezi, Hungary	
Shteinbok, Ignaz	1868	Burgkunstadt, Ger.	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Shteiner, Avraham	1900	Papa, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Shteinmetz, Meir	1886	Rakamaz, Hungary	Birkenau, Poland, 1944
Shteinmetz, Yekhiel		Transylvania, Romania	
Shtekel, Beniamin		Gura Humora, Rom.	Murafa, Ukraine, 1942
Shternberg, Mordekhai	1881	Orkeny, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Shternberg, Moshe	1894	Lublin, Poland	
Shtro, Avraham Dov			1942
Shub, Mikhael		Utena, Lithuania	Lithuania, 1941
Shubovitz, Avraham	1900	Simnas, Lithuania	Alytus, Lithuania, 1941
Shufftan, Leopold		Gdansk, Poland	Shtutthof, Polans, 1940
Shuldiner, Meir	1908	Strojinetz, Romania	Transnistria, Ukr., 1942
Shulerer, Moshe		Tarnow, Poland	
Shulhof, Moshe Yaakov	1880	Budapest, Hungary	Budapest, Hungary
Shulman, Nakhum	1885		
Shulman, Shlomo		Lukow, Poland	
Shur, Volf		Miculiczyn, Poland	Miculikzyn, Poland, 1942
Shushan, David	1905	Pruzana, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Shuster, Khanania	1890	Wisznewe, Poland	Wisznewe, Poland, 1942
Shuster, Moshe	1899	Bijelina, Yugoslavia	Jasenovac, Yugos., 1941
Shuster, Moshe		Libovne, Poland	Libovne, Poland
Shvalb,	1885	Apatin, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Shvartz, Ignatz		Botinac, Yugoslavia	
Shvartz, Khaim Benzion	1896	Minsk, Belarus	Minsk, Belarus, 1942
Shvartz, Yaakov Shmuel	1893	Albertirsa, Hungary	1944
Shvartz, Yosef	1913	Jasina, Czechoslovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Shwidler, David	1904	Daugieliszki, Poland	Polygon, Poland, 1942
Simiryman, Nakhum	1901	Bendery, Romania	
Sin Calman, Josub	1874	Herta, Romania	Edineti, Romania
Singer, Abraham	1902	Krosno, Poland	Belzec, Poland
Singer, Eliezer	1914	Nitra, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Singer, Kurt		Nordhausen, Germany	Sachsenhausen, Germ., 1938
Singer, Martin	1906	Prievidza, Slovakia	1942
Singer, Samuel		Zagreb, Croatia	Zagreb, Croatia, 1941
Singer, Yakow	1898	Lublin, Poland	Kowel, Poland
Sirota, Gershon	1874	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1943
Sirota, Lejb Yehuda		Koritz, Poland	Koritz, Poland

Sirota, Yisrael	1895	Hotin, Romania	1942
Skorokhod, Meir		Lubny, Ukraine	
Skreikus, Pinkhas	1886	Novy Bohumin, Czech.	Poland, 1942
Slager, David	1871	Middelharnes, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Slavni, Eliezer	1899	Sosnowiec, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Slep, Avraham		Wilno, Poland	
Slobodiansky, Ber		Rowne, Poland	
Slovak, Hilel	1908	Sabatko, Yugoslavia	Ukraine
Smilovitz, Mordekhai Shmuel	1893	Munkacz, Hungary	Buchenwald, Germany, 1945
Smolyar, Kiva	1881		1941
Snarski, Avraham		Bialystok, Poland	
Solnik, Moshe Aharon		Nowogrod, Poland	Lomza, Poland
Soloveichik,		Kelm, Lithuania	Kelm, Lithuania, 1941
Soloveichik, Yitzkhak	1894	Lodz, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Sosnowsky, Makhel Douvid		Lodz, Poland	
Spasser, Jakob	1893	Sombor, Yugoslavia	1945
Spigl, Herman	1902	Sid, Yugoslavia	
Spiegel, Mihaly	1913	Satmar, Romania	Mathausen, Austria, 1944
Spiegel, Tzvi Elimelekh		Fokto, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Spiewak, Moshe	1904	Dzaloshitz, Poland	Dzaloshitz, Poland
Spier, Hermann	1899	Hildesheim, Germany	Treblinka, Poland, 1943
Spira, Yehuda Leib	1895	Kowno, Lithuania	Wilno, Poland, 1943
Spitzer, Herman Chaim		Kormend, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Spitzer, Isidore		Kolbsheim, France	
Spivak, Hamber		Vrsac, Yugoslavia	Topovske, Yugos., 1941
Springer, Adolph		Virivotica, Croatia	Virivotica, Croatia, 1941
Starozinsky, Khaim Aharon	1885	Nemaksciai, Lith.	Nemaksciai, Lith., 1941
Stashevski, Shmuel	1912	Frankfurt amMain, Ger.	
Stavorovski, Yaakov	1907	Bieniakonie, Poland	Woronowo, Poland, 1942
Stawiski, Hanoch	1895	Lidzbark, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland
Stegman-Shvartz, Shaul		Recklinghausen, Ger.	Lvov, Poland
Stein, Joseph	1914	Gravenhage, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Stein, Leo	1929	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Steinbock, Ignaz	1880	Burgkunstatdt, Bav.	Belzec, Poland, 1942
Steiner, Abraham	1900	Papa, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Steiner, Asher Yisrael	1885		Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Steinfeld, Lev Bertalan	1898	Budapest, Hungary	Hungary, 1945
Steinmetz, Yechiel	1907	Grosvardein, Romania	Ukraine, 1944
Stern, David		Vakfarkasd, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Stern, Herman			Auschwitz, Poland
Stern, Ichezkel	1879	Hrusov, Moravia	
Stern, Jen0 Yaakov	1909		
Stern, Shmuel			Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Stern, Yitzkhak	1870	Somorja, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Stern-Gans, Naftali	1906	Luki, Slovakia	Lublin, Poland, 1941
Sternberg, Yechiel	1897	Leszno, Poland	Rawicz, Poland, 1941
Sternfeld, Ephraim	1877	Berlin, Germany	Theresienstadt, Czech.

Stiller, Rakhmiel	1887	Khislavichi, Russia	Khislavichi, Russia, 1941
Stockhamer, Abraham		Tlumacz, Poland	Stanislaw, Poland, 1942
Stoessler, Arnold	1886	Olmutz, Moravia	Auschwitz, Poland
Stranders, Emil	1917	Amsterdam, Holland	Buchenwald, Germany, 1945
Strassfeld, Moshe		Stanislaw, Poland	Stanislaw, Poland, 1941
Stroh, Abraham			1942
Stupelman, Avrom		Mogilev, Belorus	Mogilev, Belorus, 1942
Sungolovski, Borukh Yitzkhak	1875	Slupca, Poland	Poland, 1943
Sungolovski, Heshil Yehoshua	1906	Slupca, Poland	Tallinn, Estonia, 1943
Sungolovski, Lipman	1912	Slupca, Poland	Poland, 1943
Suss, Beni		St. Poelten, Austria	
Sussmann, Gustav Barukh	1892	Elberfeld, Germany	Elberfeld, Germany, 1937
Svartz, Copel	1892	Dorohoi, Moldavia	1942
Szemel, Dawid	1860	Kalisz, Poland	Kalisz, Poland
Szewcynski, Yosef		Riga, Latvia	
Szklar, Zeev		Mir, Poland	Mir, Poland, 1940
Szklarz, Isaac	1892	Lodz, Poland	Chelmno, Poland, 1942
Szljajcher, David	1924	Keulen, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Szlingenbaum, Shlima	1900	Inowroclaw, Poland	Sompolno, Poland, 1942

T

Tabak, Levi	1896	Rosavlia, Romania	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Taksar, Sender	1865	Volochisk, Ukraine	Volochisk, Ukraine, 1941
Tashlitzki, Shlomo		Budapest, Hungary	Budapest, Hungary
Taub, Eliezer Yoseph	1901	Moseu, Romania	
Taub, Jecheskel Schrage		Senica, Slovakia	Poland, 1942
Teblowicz,		Liegnitz, Germany	
Tedeschi, Gino		Firenze, Italy	Auschwitz, Poland, 1945
Teichman, Moshe	1890	Krakow, Poland	Poland, 1942
Teikhman, Moshe		Radom, Poland	Radom, Poland, 1944
Tenenbaum, Yisaskhar		Radomsko, Poland	1942
Tennen, Victor Chaim	1880	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Teper, Yashon	1895	Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine, 1942
Tirer, Aharon Zelig		Dorohoi, Romania	Dorohoi, Romania
Tirer, Haim		Darabani, Romania	Tropova, Ukraine
Tkatsch, Yisrael		Budapest	
Tobolski, Moshe	1910	Skidel, Poland	
Tobovitz, Eliezer Liber		Topolcany, Slovakia	1944
Topper, Tzvi Hersh		Novy Sacz, Poland	1943
Topper, Yaakov		Breslau, Germany	Poland
Traub, Ladislav Mordekhai	1911	Pressburg, Slovakia	Majdanek, Poland, 1943
Triger, Yoel Leib	1900	Sharlerau, Belgium	
Tropper, Salomon	1863	Berlin, Germany	
Tsipris, Yefim Khaim		Kishinev, Bessarabia	Bessarabia, Romania
Tsitrinesth,		Lukow, Poland	
Tugendhaft, Asher	1887	Duesseldorf, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland

Turk, Hersh Tzvi			Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Tuvshstein, Yosef		Czernowitz, Bukovenia	
Tzeikhner, Aharon	1896	Breb, Romania	Breb, Romania, 1944
Tzibul, Benjamin			
Tzim, David Elimelekh			Auschwitz, Poland
Tzipris, Yankel	1890	Kishinev, Bessarabia	Kishinev, Bessarabia, 1941
Tzitrinash, Yehuda	1874	Lutzk, Poland	Lutzk, Poland
Tzukerman, David	1874	Sanok, Poland	
Tzukerman, Kalman		Uscziki, Poland	

U

Umedman, Moshe		Ataki, Bessarabia	Ukraine
Unger, Shmuel	1908	Wierzbnik, Poland	Treblinka, Poland, 1942
Unger, Yosef	1895	Stopnica, Poland	
Unger, Yosef	1900	Zawercie, Poland	Bergen, Germany, 1944
Urbakh, Herschel		Lutotow, Poland	Lodz, Poland, 1941
Usiatinski, Leib	1878	Lipovets, Ukraine	Lipovets, Ukraine
Uvich, Motl	1893	Szeged, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland

V

Vainberger, Shmuel Tzvi	1877		Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Vais, Yitzkhak	1902	Gyula, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Vaisleder, Shlomo		Lublin, Poland	
Vaisleder, Yomen		Lublin, Poland	
Vaks, Shaul	1880	Mala Bagachivka, Ukr.	Korchovla, Poland, 1942
Valetzky, Shmuel	1870	Zuromin, Poland	1942
Van Amerongen, Samuel	1923	Naarden, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Van der Horst, Michael	1922	Gravenhage, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Van Frank, Amman	1922	Haarlem, Holland	Central Europe, 1943
Van Weerden, Paul	1910	Antwerp, Belgium	Siegburg, Germany, 1943
Van Zwaanenburg, Natan	1913	Amsterdam, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Vaze, Misa	1880	Druzhkopol, Poland	Druzhkopol, Poland
Vedro, Berl	1883	Vakhnovka, Ukraine	Vakhnovka, Ukraine, 1943
Veg, Izidor	1913	Antwerp, Belgium	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Veiner, Peter	1887	Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa, Ukraine
Veinfeld, Khaim Shmuel		Wlodawa, Poland	Rowna, Poland
Veis, Herman	1910	Sombor, Yugoslavia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Veis, Shimon Ozer	1898	Czechoslovakia	Germany, 1945
Veksler, Kupul		Minsk, Belorus	
Veksler, Moshe	1900	Czernowitz, Bukovenia	Transnistria, Ukr., 1943
Velichkin, Abram	1905	Leningrad, Russia	Leningrad, Russia
Vider, Yecheskel		Kisvarda, Hungary	Poland
Vigdorovich, Yakov	1891	Vilkovishki, Lithuania	Vilkovishki, Lithuania, 1941
Vigman, Abram		Korzec, Poland	Korzec, Poland
Vilkanski, Shaul Yehuda	1888	Czechanowiec, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Vilner, Zelik	1871	Koszylowce, Poland	Koszylowce, Poland, 1941

Vinkler, Pinkhas	1885	Sarvar, Hungary	Bergen-Belsen, Germany
Vital, Meir	1915	Corfu, Greece	
Vgel, Dragutin		Zagreb, Croatia	Zagreb, Croatia, 1941
Vogel, Karoly		Ujpest, Hungary	
Vogel, Leopold	1901	Duesseldorf, Germany	Minsk, Belarus
Voiczik, Mane Eliezer	1894	Ponevezh, Lithuania	Ponevezh, Lithuania, 1941
Volf, Khaim Barukh	1892	Nowy Sacz, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Volner, Aharon	1913	Warsaw, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Volovski, Noakh	1890	Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944

W

Wainfeld, Khaim			1940
Wainriber, Moshe	1886	Markuszow, Poland	Alempin, Poland, 1942
Wainshtein, Avraham Yitzkhak	1914	Gluboka, Czech.	Gluboka, Czech., 1942
Waisbort, Moshe	1891	Wisokie, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Wais, Abram Isachar	1887	Katowice, Poland	Rzeszow, Poland, 1943
Wais, Eliezer	1895	Nowy Targ, Poland	
Waiser, David		Balta, Ukraine	1940
Waizer, Pinkhas	1878	Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Wald, David	1895	Marosvasarhely, Rom.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wald, Yosef	1909	Szatmarnemeti, Rom.	1945
Waldmann, Aron	1905	Berlin, Germany	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Walecki, Shmuel	1889	Zuromin, Poland	Treblinka, Poland
Waller, Barukh Khaim	1900		
Walt, Abram	1926	Warsaw, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1941
Walter, Moshe	1900	Grosvardein, Romania	Grosvardein, Romania
Wanschow, Mozes	1920	Amsterdam, Holland	Grosvardein, Poland, 1943
Weber, Eliyahu	1879	Budapest, Hungary	
Weberman, Avraham	1918	Chodel, Poland	Warsaw, Poland, 1943
Wechsler, Jakob	1890	Karlsruhe, Germany	Les Milles, France
Wechselman, Erhard E.		Vienna, Austria	Auschwitz, Poland
Weijl, Juda	1920	Rotterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Weinberg, Yosef	1914		
Weinberger, Gershon Meir	1900	Ungvar, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Weiniger, Meier	1929	Gravenhage, Holland	Sobibor, Poland, 1943
Weinreb, Heinrich	1927	Amsterdam, Holland	Buchenwald, Germany, 1945
Weinstein,		David-Horodok, Pol.	David-Horodok, Pol., 1941
Weinstein, Berl	1906	Galanta, Slovakia	Poland
Weinstein, Yitzkhak		Lvov, Poland	
Weis, Avraham Simkha	1907	Munkacs, Czech.	
Weis, Isakhar Ber-Dov	1913	Grosvardein, Rom.	
Weis, Leo	1895	Povazska Bystrica, Cz.	Auschwitz, Poland
Weis, Samuel	1880	Debrecen, Hungary	1945
Weiser, Mordechai Chaim	1906	Munkacs, Czech.	Ukraine, 1942
Weisman, David	1895		1944
Weisman, Josip		Zagreb, Croatia	Zagreb, Croatia, 1941

Weiss, Alexander		Yugoslavia	1941
Weiss, Leo	1906	Slovakia, Czech.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Weiss, Pinkhas	1906	Liepaja, Latvia	Belzec, Poland
Weiss, Shmuel		Debrecen, Hungary	Austria, 1945
Weiss, Yaakov	1888	Sarajevo, Bosnia	Yugoslavia, 1941
Weissmann, David		Vienna, Austria	
Weisz, Haim Yisrael		Janoshaza, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Weisz, Hilel	1896	Miskolc, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Weisz, Natan	1910	Mezokovesd, Hungary	Mathausen, Austria, 1945
Weisz, Sandor	1883	Arad, Romania	Arad, Romania, 1944
Weitzman, Israelke	1870	Staszow, Poland	Staszow, Poland, 1942
Weiz, Lipot		Cluj, Romania	
Wider, Adolf	1890		Dachau, Bavaria, 1944
Wider, Avraham	1912	Hajdanasz, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wider, Bubi	1907	Wagehei, Hungary	Yugoslavia, 1944
Wider, Moshe Shalom	1916	Hajdanasz, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wieder, Asher		Hajdanasz, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Wieder, Avraham	1885	Nove Mesto Nad, Cz.	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wieder, Yekutiel	1890	Michalovce, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland
Wieder, Zalman Leib		Michalovce, Slovakia	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wiener, Avraham Dov	1902	Dobra, Poland	Lodz, Poland,
Wiener, Yeruchim	1879	Tarnow, Poland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1943
Wiesel, Mordekhai Tzvi	1889	Debrecen, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wiesner, Shlomo		Ujhely, Hungary	
Winer, Shlomo	1903		
Winik, Shlomo	1906	Bekas, Romania	Kishinev, Bessarabia, 1941
Winkler, Pinkhas	1885	Sarvar, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland
Winkler, Yekhezkel	1902	Alsozsolca, Hungary	1944
Winograd, Eizer	1889	Lodz, Poland	Lodz, Poland
Winzelberg, Alter		Ciezkowice, Poland	1941
Witteboon, Samuel	1914	Amsterdam, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Witenek, Yoel		Bucharest, Romania	Bucharest, Romania, 1941
Wittenberg, Alter	1903	Augustow, Poland	
Woletzki, Shmuel	1870	Zuromin, Poland	1942
Wolf, Avraham	1920	Warsaw, Poland	Majdanek, Poland, 1942
Wolff, Ahron	1893	Brieg, Germany	
Wolff, Georg		Hamburg, Germany	Riga, Latvia, 1941
Wolfson, David Beni	1893		Fuerstenfeldbruck, Ger., 1945
Wolkenfeld, Ignatz		Emden, Germany	Warsaw, Poland, 1942
Wolocki, Elyahu	1880	Bialystok, Poland	
Workum, Henri	1922	Amsterdam, Holland	Germany, 1945
Wulfovitz, Eliezer	1904	Wilkowyszky, Lith.	Wilkowyszky, Lithuania, 1942
Wultz, Julius Yehuda	1883	Bekescsaba, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Wuerzburger, Siegfried	1877	Frankfurt amMain, Ger.	Lodz, Poland, 1942
Wurdiger, Aharon		Budapest, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944

Y

Yakubovitz, Eliezer		Petrovgrad, Yugoslavia	Beckerek, Yugoslavia
Yakubovitz, Yaakov Ber		Lutotow, Poland	Poland
Yezerki, Zyama	1865	Gomel, Belorus	Gomel, Belorus, 1941
Yolles, Barukh		Sambor, Poland	Belzec, Poland, 1943

Z

Zaks, Hershel	1908	Tuchin, Poland	Tuchin, Poland, 1942
Zaks, Yitzkhak		Lodz, Poland	
Zalberman, Simon	1862	Berlin, Germany	
Zaltzman, Shmuel	1900	Krasznik, Poland	Krasznik, Poland
Zaretzki, Avraham	1883	Lachwa, Poland	Novigrod, Poland, 1942
Zdrojewicz, Leib Zelig	1870	Nowogrod, Poland	Bialystok, 1942
Zef, Aba		Lazdei, Lithuania	Lazdei, Lithuania, 1941
Zeisler, Mendel		Antwerp, Belgium	
Zelazny, Binyamin			Bergen-Belsen, Ger., 1945
Zeldin, Avraham	1907	Marculesti, Bessarabia	Marculesti, Bessarabia, 1941
Zelewski, David		Kolo, Poland	
Zeligman, Yosef	1902	Silale, Lithuania	Silale, Lithuania, 1941
Zelkovitz, Yitzkhak Mordekhai		Sulejow, Poland	
Zeltzer, Max	1872	Hungary	
Zeltzer, Meir	1890		Oszmiana, Poland,
Zeltser, Sandor	1910	Szombathely, Hungary	Russia, 1942
Zeltzer, Yitzkhak	1893	Soroksar, Hungary	Auschwitz, Poland, 1944
Ziegel, Pinkas	1888	Hamburg, Germany	Stanislaw, Poland, 1941
Zinger, Yaakov	1891	Lublin, Poland	
Ziserman, Shmilek	1852	Slavuta, Ukraine	Slavuta, Ukraine, 1942
Zladukowski, Eliyahu	1888		1942
Zomer, Itzik	1880	Skole, Poland	Stanislaw, Poland, 1942
Zorman, Leib	1875	Kishinev, Bessarabia	Fergana, Uzbekistan, 1943
Zukerman, Zyshe	1880	Leczna, Poland	Majdanek, Poland, 1941
Zusman, Barukh Gustav		Wuppertal, Germany	
Zwart, Juda	1928	Purmerend, Holland	Auschwitz, Poland, 1942
Zwerling, Dov Ber	1914		Auschwitz, Poland, 1943

Akhein atah eil mistateir

Meditation on the Shoah

Text: Isaiah 45: 15

Music: Aaron Blumenfeld
Songs of Supplication, 2010, no. 11

With devotion

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major). It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with the instruction 'With devotion' and features a melodic line with lyrics 'Oy-voy voy-voy, oy voy,voy-voy, vom. Oy voy oy-voy, oy-voy oy-voy, vom.' The second staff continues the melody with lyrics 'Oy-voy oy-voy,voy vom__voy voy-voy,oy-voy voy-voy vom.__oy voy-voy voy,__dai-di dai-dai,'. The third staff has lyrics 'yom bom. Oy - voy voy - voy ya - da dom.__A - khein a - tah,__a -'. The fourth staff concludes with lyrics 'khein a - tah,__a - tah__eil__mis - ta - teir.' Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Am, Em, Am, Em, F, G, F, Bb°7, Am/E, Bb°7, Bm/E, Dm, G, Am/E, F, Am/E, Bb°7/F, Bb°7/F, Am/E, rit., E7, Am.

Oy-voy voy-voy, oy voy,voy-voy, vom. Oy voy oy-voy, oy-voy oy-voy, vom.

5 Oy-voy oy-voy,voy vom__voy voy-voy,oy-voy voy-voy vom.__oy voy-voy voy,__dai-di dai-dai,

9 yom bom. Oy - voy voy - voy ya - da dom.__A - khein a - tah,__a -

12 khein a - tah,__a - tah__eil__mis - ta - teir.

Truly, you are a God Who hides Yourself

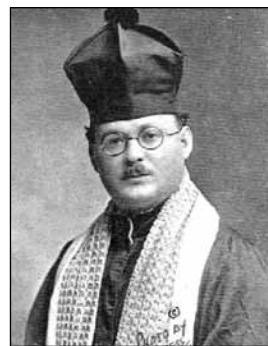
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Golden Sunset

A Mediterranean Touch at Mid-Century: Berele Chagy (1892-1954)

Gleaned from many sources

When the State of Israel—first flowering of the Jewish people’s redemption—burst forth in May of 1948, Hazzan Berele Chagy was nearing the age of sixty and his once-bright tenor had lost its edge. But the prevalent opinion among synagogue cognoscenti was that he more than made up for it by varying his vocal quality to suit any given mood. So much so, that his rabbi at Temple Beth El of Borough Park in New York, Israel Schorr, used to address him with the blessing, *Zokheir ha-b’rit*—“Blessed is the One Who remembers the Covenant”—the variegated colors of Chagy’s *heymishe daven’n* resembled nothing so much as those of a rainbow (another meaning of *b’rit*). Rabbi Schorr once characterized Chagy’s successor in Borough Park—Moshe Koussevitzky—as “demanding answers,” whereas Berele “asked questions, he had a poignant quality about him.” Both of these legendary cantors took a Jovian stance that typified mid-20th century hazzanut. The very best cantorial recitatives of this period “expressed universal uncertainties,” asserts Itzik Gottesman, Culture critic for the Yiddish *Forward*.¹



Shortly after being appointed as Hazzan-designate of Temple Beth El, Moshe Koussevitzky was invited to sing at Berele Chagy’s Retirement Dinner. He performed Israel Schorr’s *She-yibaneh beit ha-mikdash* (“May the Temple be Rebuilt”), a composition that he had popularized through recordings and countless performances in Europe, the United States and Israel. When the applause died down, Chagy rose slowly from his seat. “Would it be alright if I ‘said’ something, also?” he asked. The attendees, who knew how sick he was at the time and were afraid that singing would aggravate his condition, tried

1 Itzik Gottesman, “Steven Greenman’s Devotional Creations,” *Forward*, August 6-12, 2010.

to dissuade him. Undeterred, Chagy proceeded to chant the fourth paragraph from Grace after Meals, *Raheim na* (“Have mercy on Your People”), so magnificently that it simply stunned the entire assemblage.

Chagy’s colleagues in the *Khazonim farband* (Jewish Ministers Cantors Association of America) elected him Treasurer, as had the South African Cantors’ Association in 1937, while he held a position in Johannesburg. They also instinctively turned to him when problems arose. Once, during a *Khazonim Farband* concert at the old Metropolitan Opera House on 39th Street in Manhattan, a programming mix-up led to such raucous disagreement backstage that proceedings ground to an embarrassing halt. After about fifteen minutes of nothing happening, people in the audience were ready to start a riot. The Farband’s President at the time, Moshe Erstling, begged Chagy to go out front and try to mitigate the damage. He did so, and with his usual quiet reserve sang a *Tikanta shabbat* (“You Ordained the Sabbath”) that brought down the house.²

The poet Chaim Nachman Bialik would have loved Chagy’s understated Weekday Minḥah, at which he excelled. In fact, his artistry first blossomed in his later years when the voice darkened, and a simple trill in mid-range achieved a greater effect than his brilliant youthful top notes ever had. When davening he typically stood at the Amud closed-eyed and weeping. So did those whom he led in prayer. His last compositions, narrower in compass and shorter in length than earlier ones like *Mi she-asah nisim* (“The One Who Wrought Miracles”), are eminently suitable for today’s cantors and their impatient congregants.

Although he never visited the State of Israel, as his career drew near its close, Berele Chagy was increasingly influenced by the Middle Eastern turns of phrase that were being adopted by Jewish composers of the so-called ‘Mediterranean’ School. The brief melodic refrains he began to sprinkle throughout his habitual prayer at the Amud attested to this—*V’eineinu tir’ناه* (“May We Witness Your Kingdom”) in the Shaḥarit Kedushah, and *Hal’lu et adonai* (“All Nations Praise God”) in the Hallel exemplified the style. So, too, did the wide-open tone devoid of vibrato that he used when singing them, evocative of a shepherd’s call echoing through the Hills of Judah and Ephraim. He included two selections based on Yemenite tunes in his retrospective 78 r.p.m. album for Stinson Records (1950), arranged by Julius Chajes: *Yah adir* (“Mighty God on High”), and *Adarim* (“Mountain Flocks”).

2 The *Journal* is indebted to former CA president Chaim Najman for this anecdote, told to him by his father.

Back in 1918 when the British government had declared its intention of allowing Jews to resettle and rebuild Palestine, Chagy had translated the Hebrew epic poem, *Hatikvah* (“The Hope”), into idiomatic Yiddish. Then, Great Britain reneged on its promise and shut down all Jewish immigration. After the Holocaust, Chagy relied no longer upon secular Zionist hymns. Instead, he turned a prayer from Weekday Ma’ariv—*Yir’u eineinu* (“Let Our Eyes Behold Your Return to Zion”)—into a quasi-national anthem. So convincingly Mediterranean-sounding is his recording of the piece and so imbued with a feeling of national uplift that, according to cantorial chronicler Akiva Zimmermann, Israelis rise from their seats whenever they sing Chagy’s setting of this prayer. Of particular note is the way Chagy tone-painted the words

be-emor l’-tsiyon, malakh elohayikh—

“Say unto Zion: “Your God truly reigns!”

Yir'u eineinu

Text: Daily Ma'ariv Liturgy

Music: Berele Chagy
Piano: Charles Heller

Lively

Lively

5 **Refrain**

Yir - u ei - nei - nu, v' - yis - mah li - bei - nu, v' -

9

ta - geil naf - shei - nu, bi - shu - at - kha be - e - met,

8^{va}

13

be - e - mor l' - tsi - yon ma - lakh e - lo - ha - yikh,

17

be - e - mor l' - tsi - yon ma - lakh e - lo - ha - yikh,

21

a - do - nai me - lek, a - do - nai ma - lakh,

25

a - do - nai yim - lokh l' - o - lam, l' - o - lam va - ed.

29 *rit.* **Fine** *Freely, in pastoral mood*

2nd Time dal Coda Ki

33 ha-ma-l'-khut she-l'-kha

37 hi, u-l' - o-l' mei ad tim-lokh b'-

41 kha - - - - - vod, ki ein la-nu *mf*

sfz

8th...

45 *rit.* 1. dal segno al Fine 2. Coda

me - lekh E - - la a - tah. Ba - -

49 3

rukh a-tah, a-do-nai, ha - me-lekh bikh-vo-do ta-mid yim-lokh a-lei-nu l' - o-lam va-ed, a-

53 *f* 6 6 6 *ff rit...*

lei-nu l' o - - - lam va - ed v'-al kol ma - a-

57 *fff* Tempo I° sav. Tempo I° *ff*

sav.

“The Lion in the Pack”: Israel Alter (1901-1979)

Gleaned from many sources

Born in L’vov (Yiddish: Lemberg) in Western Ukraine, Israel Alter studied with notable teachers. He began his career at Vienna’s Brigittenauer Tempel-Verein when he was twenty years old. In 1925 he moved to Hannover, Germany, where he remained for ten years before leaving during the Nazi era to become cantor of the United Hebrew Congregation in Johannesburg, South Africa. He emigrated to the United States in 1961 and was appointed to the faculty of the School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, in New York City.¹



By the time Israel Alter began teaching at the School of Sacred Music in the early 1960s his vocally active years were as a vanished dream, the voice itself but a passing shadow. Prior to that, the only recordings of Alter’s that were available in the United States featured works mostly by Sulzer and Lewandowski, stylistically a world apart from the emotional improvisatory *hazzanut* in a minor mode that had wide appeal among a guilt-ridden North American Jewry after the senseless destruction of its European counterpart.² Alter was born within two decades of Sulzer’s and Lewandowski’s deaths, in their shadow, so to speak. He considered those two 19th-century giants the living proof of Noah’s blessing to his sons in Genesis chapter 9: *Yaft elohim l’yefet v’-yishkon b’oholei shem* (“Let the beauty of Aryan nations dwell in the tents of Semitic peoples”).

In pursuit of that goal, Alter extracted thematic inspiration from emotionally-driven prayer—*T’fillat ha-regesh*—and reshaped it along lines that would prove aesthetically acceptable in the temples of Vienna and Hannover. He delved into the grammatical structure of liturgical poetry and analyzed prayer

1 After Velvel Pasternak & Noah Schall, *The Golden Age of Cantors* (New York: Tara), 1991: 15; Biographical Sketches with Irene Heskes.

2 Joseph A. Levine, *Rise and Be Seated* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson), 2001: 221f.

from a philosophical viewpoint until he could rationalize whatever musical reference he might quote to better bring out the meaning of the words.

If that was not exactly *T'fillat ha-seider*—intellectually-driven prayer—it should certainly qualify as yet a third category: *T'fillat ha-seifer* (“literarily-driven prayer”). Alter was a *yodei'a seifer*, an extremely learned individual from a truly scholarly rabbinic family. Due to his encyclopedic knowledge he inevitably borrowed other people’s ideas, often without realizing it. A case in point: *Dani'eil ish hamudot* (“Your Greatly Beloved Daniel”), a text from the *S'lihot* section of Yom Kippur Eve, whose published setting originated with Alter’s revered teacher, Yehudah Leib Miller of Vienna and later of Haifa and Jerusalem. No one who knew him would ever accuse Israel Alter of willful plagiarism. Yet he sat on a committee that published Miller’s composition as part of a posthumous collection in Johannesburg, 1949. Three years later he issued his own reworking of Miller’s composition. In fact, the piece had circulated orally, for years. As if to prove its widespread familiarity, in 1958 Sholom Katz recorded a third version using the same musical ideas, without crediting Miller.³

The reverse is true as well. In 1931 Israel Alter—then Chief Cantor of Hannover—embarked on a joint tour of Western European cities with Moshe Koussevitzky, Chief Cantor of Warsaw, in which they officiated alternately at services on Friday night and Shabbat morning. If Koussevitzky davened Kabbalat Shabbat, Alter did the honors for Ma'ariv; the following morning they would reverse the order for Shaḥarit and Musaf. Every weekend would culminate in a shared Sunday Evening recital that left critics searching for superlatives. One reviewer in Rotterdam wrote, “It is difficult to choose between them or to prefer one over the other; each has his own strengths and is in every way infinitely superior to any other cantor now before the European public.” Another critic referred to Alter’s voice as “the roar of a lion,” and to Koussevitzky’s as “an eternally bubbling spring.”⁴

Koussevitzky’s strength lay in his soaring interpretations of others’ musical inspiration, Avraham Moshe Bernstein’s *Adonai adonai* being one of his early triumphs. Alter’s forte was in the shaping of hazzanic recitatives according to theological ideas expressed in classical rabbinic prayer texts known as

3 *Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur Service Highlights*, Cantor Sholom Katz, Choir of Chizuk Amuno Congregation, Baltimore, Conducted by Hugo Weisgall, Westminster Hi-Fi LP XWN 18858, 1958: side 2, track 7

4 Translated from uncaptioned clippings in Dutch and Yiddish, from an Alter family scrapbook in possession of Alter’s nephew, Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, Canada.

ma'amarei ha"za"l (Sayings by Our Sages, of Blessed Memory). It was a match made in cantorial heaven. Alter's setting of the first Mishnah in chapter three of tractate *Avot*—*Akavya ben mahalaleil omeir* ("Akavya, son of Mahalaleil, said: 'Consider three things and you will avoid sinning'")—became a calling card of his friend and touring partner, Moshe Koussevitzky. So convincingly does it conjure up the world of the East European *beit medrash* (study hall) that people rarely associate it with its actual composer: Israel Alter—the great *Oberkantor* of more westerly Jewish communities in Hannover, Germany and Johannesburg, South Africa.

We know better. We also know that the setting of *Sh'ma koleinu* ("Hear Our Cry") composed by Alter for a series of complete services for the annual liturgical cycle, commissioned and published by the Cantors Assembly between 1966 and 1971, is the product of his own musical and scholarly imagination. His immensely powerful voice was a force of nature. His creative impulse was best described by researcher and lecturer Akiva Zimmermann, paraphrasing a verse from the Hoshanot section recited on Hoshana Rabbah:

Ha-m'lameid torah b'khol k'lei shir

Who taught Torah through every musical instrument.⁵

Alter's musical *Torah she-bikhtav* ("Written Law") consisted of his undying compositions; it is taught as *Torah she-b'al-peh* ("Oral Law") every time a hazzan chants a masterful prayer-setting of his, such as *Sh'ma koleinu*:

Hashiveinu adonai eilekha v'nashuvah, hadeish yameinu k'kedem

Turn us unto You, O God, and we shall return,

Renew our days as of old.

5 Akiva Zimmermann, "The Life and Music of Israel Alter, Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of His Birth," *Proceedings of the 54th Annual Cantors Assembly Convention*, Ellenville, NY, 2001: 70.

Sh'ma koleinu

Text: S'lihot service

Music: After Israel Alter
The Selihot Service
(Cantors Assembly, 1966)

Verse ①

6 She - ma ko - lei - nu a - do - nai e - lo - hei - nu, hus - v' - ra - heim - a -
lei - nu, v' - ka - beil - b' - ra - ha - mim - u - v' - ra - tson et t' - fil - la - tei - nu.

Verse ②

14 Ha - shi - vei - nu, a - do - nai ei - le - kha v' - na - shu - vah, had -
deish ya - mei - nu k' - ked - dem.

Verse ③

19 Al, al, al tash - li -
24 khei - nu mi - l' - fa - ne - kha v' - ru - ah kod - sh' -
29 kha al, al ti - kah mi - me - nu.

Verse ④

32 Al, al, al tash - li - khei - nu l' -
37 eit zik - nah, al tash - li - khei - nu l' - eit zik - nah, kikh - lot ko - hei - nu, kikh -
42 lot ko - hei - nu al, al al - ta - az - vei - nu.

Centennial Memories of My Father, Cantor David Kusevitsky (1911-1985)

By Valerie Kusevitsky Leibler

Our story begins in the early years of the last century in the small town of Smorgon, Lithuania, a suburb of Vilna, where Avigdor and Alte Koussevitzky lived with their four sons: Moshe, the eldest, followed by Jacob, Simcha, and the baby, my father David. There are no Jews in Smorgon today, but up until World War I, the vast majority of its inhabitants were Jewish—8,000 out of a total population of 10,000—and many noted Torah scholars, poets, and writers were born there.



Music was a very important part of the Koussevitzky heritage. Avigdor, my grandfather, was an amateur violinist, and my grandmother, Alte, came from a family of cantors. The household was filled with musical instruments—from guitars to mandolins—and each brother had his own violin. Their musical ability was such that they could just pick up an instrument, and soon be playing it well.

Life in Smorgon was uneventful until the outbreak of World War I, when Russian and German troops took turns ravaging the town and wreaking havoc on its inhabitants. To escape the invaders, the family fled to Minsk, from there to the borders of Siberia, and finally to Rostov-on-Don, where they settled for the remainder of the war. My father told me of how the family would arrive at a train station, and wait—sometimes for a day or two or even three—drinking endless cups of tea, until a train would arrive to take them to their next destination. It was the grave responsibility of my father, then three years old, to hold onto the sugar bowl throughout their travels.

In Rostov, the family settled down. The three older brothers sang in synagogue choirs, while David, at age six already a talented violinist, attended the local Jewish school and music conservatory. In 1921, after the Russian Revolution, the family returned briefly to Smorgon, and then settled in Vilna.

How did the brothers become hazzanim? There were no cantorial schools, no master classes in nusah and liturgy. They absorbed it because it was in the air they breathed. It was all around them—whether praying in shul or

listening to itinerant hazzanim or to the 10-inch records then popular—they were privy to a liturgy that passed from father to son, brother to brother. Nowadays, singers with a voice quality comparable to those possessed by the four Koussevitsky brothers would find a home at the Metropolitan Opera, but in the Poland of their youth, the natural venue for their talent was the rich tradition of the synagogue.

When oldest brother Moshe was engaged as a first tenor at the *Tohoras hakkodesh* Synagogue in Vilna, he brought along his little brother David, age twelve, to be the alto soloist. (In those days, of course, choirs were all male, as they continue to be in Orthodox shuls today; the soprano and alto parts were sung by young boys.) When Moshe was appointed Chief Cantor of Vilna's Great Synagogue, again my father moved with him, and soon he found himself conducting whenever its director—who was also *Hazzan sheini*—led services.

In the meantime, my father's skills as a musician were becoming well known in the Vilna community. At thirteen he was transcribing music for local hazzanim. Often there would be a knock at the door, where a hazzan stood, asking diffidently: "Is Dovid there?" He'd pull out a piece of music, and say to my father—"Please teach this to me," and my father would sit down and patiently work with the individual until he knew the music.

My mother often said she would have loved to know my father as a youngster, because he seems to have been an unusually precocious child.

When brother Jacob became the hazzan of the synagogue in Krimenitz, he sent for my father to conduct his choir and to coach him in the nuances of nusah. And when brother Simcha became the hazzan of Rovno, he requested that Jacob release my father, who then became choir leader for Simcha's shul.

But all this was interrupted when at age nineteen my father was drafted into the Polish army. His brothers, through various machinations and subterfuges, had managed to avoid serving in the army, but my father had no such options available.

However, where David went, music always followed. By chance, soon after his conscription, a Polish lieutenant noticed in my father's papers that he was a musician, and invited him to start a choir. My father jumped at the chance, and formed a hundred-voice chorus—mostly Gentile, but including as many Jews as he could find. The lieutenant introduced him to Church melodies, which my father transcribed and arranged for male chorus. He also managed to finagle a field trip to Warsaw, to buy the sheet music for Polish folk songs.

The Army chorus created a name for itself in the area, both for its extensive repertoire and for its beautiful sound quality. And, more importantly, my father made sure to schedule an important rehearsal whenever it was time for a long march or other army maneuvers. By this ingenious ploy, he avoided the worst aspects of army life.

His crowning moment came when, in front of the entire regiment, the general appeared, and to the awe of everyone present, shook my father's hand. This was apparently a monumental occurrence, given the usual distance between governmental figures and the Jews. The physical recognition in the form of a handshake by the general was a true measure of my father's worth. At the end of a year, he was sent to officer's school, while continuing to lead his chorus. He was discharged six months later as a lieutenant, despite never having done anything remotely soldierly.

After his army experience, David joined his parents in Warsaw, where his brother Moshe was now the hazzan at the aristocratic Tlomackie Synagogue, one of the largest and most beautiful in the world. Tragically, it would be bombed to the ground during World War II. In Warsaw, Moshe began to recognize my father's vocal talent, and encouraged him to develop his voice in order to pursue a career as a cantor instead of a choir leader; he told him: "Your future lies in your throat, not in your hands."

Thus began my father's career as a cantor. At the age of 23 he was engaged to daven for the High Holidays in Lemberg (today Lvov). The publicity was tremendous, as the many Yiddish newspapers that circulated throughout Poland carried news of the event. My father's cantorial debut took place in the local Philharmonic Hall and was attended by 2,500 people. Afterwards, invitations to daven came pouring in. He accepted a post in Rovno, officiating for the first time on *Shabbat hag-gadol*, 1935. He davened twice a month, and tickets were sold for every Shabbat that he officiated. Word of the new hazzan reached as far as London, where the Hendon Synagogue offered him a position.

His brothers Jacob and Simcha, as well as his mother, had already migrated to London, and with their encouragement, he left Poland without much regret, arriving in London in 1937. Hindsight proved it to be a very wise decision—he was saved from the fate of his fellow Jews in Poland. London was also where he met and married my mother, Patricia, and where my younger sister Elaine and I were born.

As it turned out, the only brother to remain in Poland on the eve of World War II was my uncle Moshe. During the 1930s his fame had spread throughout

the Jewish world, and he had sung to great acclaim throughout Europe, the United States, and what was then known as Palestine

Although many opportunities occurred for him to leave his homeland permanently, he decided to fulfill his contractual obligations. When the Germans invaded Poland in September of 1939, Moshe and his wife and children managed to escape the bombarded city of Warsaw right after the High Holidays (whose services Moshe led in the darkened basement of the Tlomackie complex) and ended up in Bialystok, then under Russian control. Trapped in Russia, he was forced by the Soviets to spend the war years in Tblisi, Georgia, entertaining the troops, singing opera and Russian folk songs. Though a difficult time for him, it proved infinitely better than what might have been.

Only after the war was he reunited with his wife and children, and slowly they made their way back to Warsaw. When, with enormous relief, his brothers finally heard that he was alive, they made arrangements to bring him and his family to London. Although I was then a very small child, I still remember the great excitement of his arrival, and the great joy of his reunion with his mother and brothers. They stayed with us in our apartment for several months, holding court in our living room—which my mother, pregnant with my sister, never let my father forget. Moshe had arrived without a single sheet of music, and so my father sat day and night reconstructing Moshe's entire synagogue and concert-stage repertoire from memory.

Six months later, after performing extensively all over the British Isles, Moshe and family left for America, and a few years afterwards, it was our turn. My father received an offer from Temple Emanu-El in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, NY after a congregant, the merchant Simon Ackerman, heard him daven in London.

And so, after much soul-searching, and many tears on the part of my English-born mother, we sailed into New York Harbor aboard the HMS Queen Elizabeth to embark on a new stage in our lives in March of 1949.

Growing up in Borough Park in the 1950s, I caught a glimpse of what it must have been like to live in a shtetl in pre-War Poland. In those days, by the way, the neighborhood was not yet the bastion of Hasidism that it is today. I would venture to guess that half the population consisted of Polish and Russian immigrants. There was also, of course, a smattering of American-born Jews who had lived in Borough Park since the days when most of the area had been farmland. But the overwhelming majority had one thing in common:

they were shul goers who had come from traditional backgrounds, and many were surprisingly well-versed in the art of hazzanut.

Our synagogue, Temple Emanu-El, a magnificent edifice in Georgian style, was Conservative. Around the corner stood the Young Israel, two blocks away was Temple Beth-El—the major Orthodox shul in the neighborhood, where my Uncle Moshe was cantor—and down 14th Avenue the Sephardic shul was situated a few blocks away. Surrounding them were many smaller shuls of varying shapes and sizes.

Temple Emanu-El was very large, with a balcony that wrapped around three sides—it held more people than most synagogues. When my father davened, which was usually twice a month, the shul was always completely full. Yet his voice, while sweet and lyrical, soared to the furthest reaches of the shul and beyond. He always davened with a choir, composed of eight mixed voices—augmented even more for the High Holidays. During my adolescence it was led by Herman Zalis, who had been a student of Rimsky-Korsakoff and supervised orchestrations for RCA. My father always said the davening resembled what he had done in Poland, for he sang all the same classical cantorial compositions. In England, however, the davening had been much more restricted, limited to the tradition of Central Europe.

I have met so many people over the years who told me of walking many miles on Shabbat morning so that they could hear my father daven, and what they talked about was not only his beautiful voice, but about the depth of feeling he expressed, and the great spiritual, almost divine inspiration he evoked within his fellow daveners. For all who were present, especially on the High Holidays, it was a deeply moving experience. His interpretation of the familiar prayers bound together all the members of the congregation in a soul-stirring catharsis of emotion. And while my father was singularly adept at simple, straightforward davening, with keen awareness of articulation, diction, and Hebrew grammar, he delighted in giving the congregation what they really wanted—piece after piece of soaring liturgical music for cantor and choir. Notwithstanding, there were never any theatrics or histrionics in his prayer, which he always imbued with an innate sense of dignity and elegance.

Services on Shabbat of Rosh Hodesh could last until 1:30 or 2 o'clock with no one looking impatiently at his or her watch; no one, except we children (my sister, my two brothers and I), complaining about standing for half an hour during his signature Kedushah. Rosh Hashanah services went on until 2 or 2:30. But we were luckier than those attending my uncle Moshe's shul, where services ended after 3 P.M.

Our shul had no air-conditioning, and so in the warmer months the windows were always wide open, to the delight of those outside. Services at the adjoining Modern Orthodox Young Israel Synagogue ended at a more reasonable hour, after which crowds of people would gather on the sidewalk along the 49th Street side of Temple Emanuel to listen outside, while the more liberal among them would actually come inside.

S'lihot night, tickets were sold, and hordes of people from all over the city would throng to the shul, until they were practically hanging from the rafters. Our service started at 10 P.M., and when it was over, many in the crowd would walk the two blocks to my uncle's shul—where services started at midnight—so that they could buy tickets to catch the second show.

At the conclusion of services on Shabbat, a crowd of neighborhood people stood waiting for the opportunity to share a few words with the hazzan. Our house was just a few blocks away, but it would take us anywhere from a half-hour to 45 minutes to get home, because every few steps someone waited to greet him. I've heard that some of the young women from the neighborhood would get word that he was approaching, and rush outside their homes, hoping for a smile or a quiet 'Good Shabbos' from the hazzan. Often people would follow us all the way home, where my mother, always the gracious hostess, would feel obliged to invite them in for Kiddush. Needless to say, lunch was always a late one on Shabbos.

David and Moshe were well-known far beyond the borders of Borough Park or even New York. They concertized across the United States, and indeed, throughout the world, traveling to distant places from South America to South Africa, and both made many, many trips to sing in Israel. Always, they were greeted with great acclaim, and none of the fans were more fervent than their *lantslayt* from Poland.

When Jack and I were married, our wedding was the talk of the town for months, but not for the usual reasons. True, the loving young couple was adorable, the flowers beautiful, and the meal delicious. But what the guests remembered most fondly was the magnificent ceremony performed by my Uncle Moshe, complete with full choir. The pièce de resistance was the exuberant performance of *Sheva b'rakhot* at the conclusion of the reception, by my father, ending with the two brothers singing and dancing upon the head table.

But perhaps my most poignant memory is of the time when all four brothers appeared together at an historic concert at Carnegie Hall. My Uncle Jack arrived from Winnipeg, and my Uncle Simcha journeyed all the way from South Africa, and they got together for a performance that was the most

memorable of that era of hazzanut. (And if you believe all the people who said they were there, more people saw this performance than saw Yankee pitcher Don Larsen's perfect game and slugger Roger Maris' 61st home run.) In any case, the concert was thrilling beyond words.

In my mind's eye as I recall that magical time, I see myself as a child curled up unobtrusively in a corner of the couch in our living room listening, as my father sat at the piano, and the four brothers rehearsed one of the pieces they would be singing together at the concert. The composition was Lewandowski's *Zakharti lakh hesed n'urayikh*, translated as "I remember with favor, the devotion of your youth."

The heavenly music—sung in harmony by those heavenly voices—is with me still. And as that moment is illuminated in memory for me now, I realize that I was afforded the rare opportunity to catch the merest glimpse of the lives of four loving and devoted brothers as they recaptured their lives in the Poland of their youth.

Valerie Kusevitsky Leibler is Vice President of Ritual at the Forest Hills Jewish Center in Queens, New York, which ran a series of programs several years ago, each focusing on Shabbat in a different European country before WW II. She was asked to speak about her family heritage at the "Shabbat in Poland" program. This article is adapted from that speech, with her kind permission.

*[Editor's note:] David Kusevitsky was the most giving of artists. In Europe he learned that when people paid their admission, one had to deliver. He was extraordinary in concert, able to sing full-tilt for hours, interacting with his audience all the while. On stage, his exemplary Yiddish breathed an air of Eastern European gentility; on the Bimah, his faultless Hebrew stirred memories of communities and ceremonies still older. Even toward the end, witnesses to his enactment of the High Priest's kneeling during the Avodah of Yom Kippur described it as "Princely." Noble of spirit and upright in demeanor, he was the pride of his calling. At Cantors Assembly conventions, no program of traditional hazzanut would have been complete without the audience demanding that he come onstage—even though he wasn't scheduled as a participant—and favor them with a selection. With a gracious smile he would announce his favorite text from the Amidah: *V'khol ha-hayyim yodukha selah* (May all the living praise Your name in truth, forever).*

V'khol ha-hayyim

Text: the Amidah

Music: David Kusevitsky
after David Ayzenstadt
Piano: Charles Heller

Maestoso
♩ = 88 approx.

4 *rit.* *rit.*

loco *rit.* *loco* *colla parte*

7
khol v'-khol ha-hay-yim, v'-khol, v'-khol ha-hay-yim yo - du - kha, yo - du - kha se - lah. V' -

9
khol, v'-khol ha - hay - yim, v' - khol, v'-khol, v' - khol ha -

12

hay - yim yo - du - kha se - lah; v' - khol ha - hay - yim, v' - khol ha -

14

hay - yim yo - du - kha se - lah, yo - du - kha se - lah, vi - ha - l' -

16

lu et shi - m' - kha be - e - met, be - e - met; vi - ha - l' -

18

lu, vi - ha - l' - lu, vi - ha - l' - lu et shi - m' - kha; vi - ha - l' -

20

lu — et shi - m' - kha, — et shi - m' - kha — be - e - met, — ha -

22

steady tempo

eil — y' - shu - a - tei - nu v' -

24

ez - ra - tei - nu, y' - shu - a - tei - nu v' - ez - ra - tei - nu se - lah; — y' -

27

shu - a - tei - nu v' - ez - ra - tei - nu, y' -

29

shu - a - tei - nu v' - ez - ra - tei - nu se - lah, y' -

31

shu - a - tei - nu v' - ez - ra - tei - nu, y' - shu - a -

33

tei - - - nu, y' - shu - a -

35

tei - nu v' - ez - ra - tei - nu, y' - shu - a - tei - nu v' - ez - ra -

36

tei - nu, y'-shu - a - tei - - - nu, y' shu - tei - nu, v'-ez-ra-

38

tei - - - nu, v'-ez-ra - tei - - - nu

40

Reprise

se - lah. Ba - - - rukh a -

colla parte

43

tah - - - a - do - nai, hat - tov - - -

colla parte

Red.

45

shi - m' - kha u - l' - kha na -

48

- eh; hat-tov shi - m' - kha u - l' - kha

51

na - eh, hat-tov shi - m' -

loco

loco

Ped. ad lib

54

kha u - l' - kha na - eh, hat-tov

57

shi - m'-kha u - l'-kha na -

60

- eh, hat - tov shi-m'-kha u - l'-kha na - eh

63

ossia

3

f

65

l' - ho - - dot.

8^{va}

8^{vb}

A Brand Plucked from the Holocaust: Sholom Katz (1915-1982)

Gleaned from many sources

The miraculous story of Sholom Katz's reprieve from certain death recalls that of an earlier hazzan. Through his emotional chanting of the Memorial prayer *Eil malei rahamim* ("God Full of Mercy"), Hirsch of Ziviotov (Poland) moved the Tartars to save 3,000 Jews from the rampaging Cossack mob of Bogdan Chmielnitzki in 1648.¹ Almost three centuries later (in 1942), the 27-year-old Sholom Katz might have had that miracle in mind when he and 3,000 other Jews were about to be shot outside the Nazi-occupied town of Brailov in the Ukrainian district east of the Dniester River, (now Brailiv).



On the 12th of December the condemned Jews were herded outside to dig their own mass grave. As they stood beside the long trenches waiting for the machine guns to mow them down, Katz asked for permission to sing a prayer. The officer in charge said, "all right, Jew, die singing!" Katz chanted the Prayer for the Dead, interrupted by gun bursts as the white snow turned red with Jewish blood. He expected to die at any moment, but the Nazi commandant liked his voice and spared him so he could sing for the officers in their quarters all that night. The next morning he was allowed to escape.

His life was spared again when he sang for a group of Roumanian collaborators who handed him over for imprisonment in a German concentration camp until the Russian Army liberated him in 1944 along with several hundred other half-starved survivors. He continued to sing after that, at the Zionist Congress held in Basel, Switzerland in December 1946, in Paris the following year, and in Israel during the 1950s. Wherever he sang, people referred to him as the Cantor from the Next World (*ha-hazzan mei-olam ha-ba*).² At its best, his sizeable lyrico-spinto tenor combined throbbing warmth with a radiant openness well suited to the liturgical chant of an enlightened Orthodoxy that had nurtured him until the deportation of Hungarian Jewry.

1 Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Jewish Music* (New York: Henry Holt), 1929: 194; citing Nathan Hanover, *Yevén Metzula*, Cracow, 1896: 9.

2 *Yedi'ot aharonot*, July 1950.

He had been considered a child prodigy in the town of his birth, Oradea (Yiddish: Grosswardein), Western Romania, but a part of Hungary at the time. The Jewish community there was culturally advanced, boasting established synagogues of both the Orthodox and Neolog (Hungarian Reform) persuasions, each with its own High School. The town was also home to a Religious Zionist weekly, *Our People*.³ As a child Sholom Katz had thrived in this rich cultural environment, and went on to study voice in Budapest and Vienna. Then, though extremely young to hold such a position, he was appointed Chief Cantor of Kishinev, Bessarabia just before World War II erupted. He emigrated to the U.S. in 1947, where his recording of the *Eil malei rahamim* set a new standard for foreign-language discs when its sales ran over 300,000 copies. It won the Grand Prix du Disque in 1950, and in 1970 was played during the closing credits of an Italian film titled “The Garden of the Finzi-Continis”—under an image of this prominent Jewish family’s home after its members were taken away by the Nazis.⁴

Sholom Katz’s 1958 LP for Westminster, *Kol Nidre Highlights*, accompanied by Hugo Weisgall and the male choir of Chizuk Amuno Congregation of Baltimore, is perhaps the last American cantorial recording of the 20th century that remained true to the spirit of the Eastern European synagogue’s *Khorshul* (chorally oriented) worship tradition, with fully developed cantorial statements echoed by brief—but disciplined—choral commentary.

Katz served the Modern Orthodox Beth Sholom Congregation in Washington, DC for 10 years until retiring in order to devote himself full-time to concert appearances. His personalization of material learned from cantorial masters like Yehudah Leib Miller (1886-1947) and Israel Alter (1901-1979) subtly altered the compositions, adding a lyricism and flow that is not apparent in the written score. This is especially true of *Ha-vein yakir li efrayim* (“Do I not remember My precious son, Ephraim?”) from the *Zikhronot*, or “Remembrance” section of Rosh Hashanah Musaf, a hazzanic recitative that Katz adapted from Cantor Moshe David Steinberg (1871-1941). Sholom Katz gave the piece a personal touch, including the melodic stamp of his own Postwar era, a dance-like interlude in Israeli-Horah rhythm just before the climactic ending:

3 Yehouda Marton, s.v. “Oradea,” *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter). 1972, 12: 1437-1438.

4 The *Journal* is indebted to Simon Rutberg of Hatikvah Music in Los Angeles for this particular observation, and to David R. Prager of London for many other background details. Mr. Rutberg adds that, “whenever the film is played anywhere, we get requests for this recording.”

Ki midei dabri vo, zakhor ezk'renu od...raheim arahamenu...

“My heart still yearns whenever I speak of Ephraim...

I'll surely act mercifully towards him again,” says God.

Ha-vein yakkir li

Text: *Zikhronot* Section of
Rosh Hashanah Musaf Amidah

Music: Sholom Katz
After David Moshe Steinberg
Tr. & arr: Joseph Levine

1

Cantor 4

V' - al y'-dei a-va-de-kha han-vi-im ka - tuv lei - mor. Ha-lokh v'-ka-ra-ta b'-oz -

High Voice

Low Voice (Hum...)

7

-nei y'-ru-sha-la-yim lei - mor, ha - lokh v'-ka-ra-ta b'-oz - nei y'-ru-sha-la-yim lei - mor.

10

Ko___ a - mar, a - mar a-do nai_ za-khar - ti lakh he - sed_n'-u - ra -

14

yikh a - ha-vat k'-lu-lo-ta - yikh, lekh-teikh ah'-rai bam - mid - bar b' -

19

e - rets, b'e - rets lo z' - ru - ah, v' - ne - -

23

- - - mar. V' - za - khar - ti a - ni et b' - ri - ti o - takh

26

bi - mei n' - u - ra - yikh, va - ha - ki - mo - ti lakh

29

b' - rit o - lam, v' - ne - e - mar. Ha - vein yak - kir li ef -

32

ra - - - yim, im ye - - - led, ye - led sha - a -

35

shu im; ha - vein yak - kir li ef - ra - - - yim

39 *rit.* *sprightly*

im_ ye-led, im_ ye-led, ye-led sha-a- shu - im, ki mid-dei da-bri vo

44 *rit.*

za-khor ez-k'-re-nu od, ki mid-dei da-bri vo za-khor ez-k'-re-nu od; ki mid-dei

48

dab - ri__ vo za - khor_ ez - k' - re - nu__ od, al kein ha-mu, ha-mu mei-ai__ lo,

51

al kein ha - mu, ha-mu mei-ai lo; al kein ha-mu mei - ai - lo. Ra-heim a-ra-ha-men - nu, ra-

54

heim a-ra-ha-men - nu, n'-um a - do - nai!

“The Cantors’ Cantor” – Moshe Ganchoff (1905-1997)

Gleaned from many sources

Until the very end of his long career, Moshe Ganchoff represented our last connection to the style that earned hazzanut of the early 20th century the sobriquet: Golden Age. He was born in Odessa and emigrated as a young child with his parents to the United States. He received his early hazzanic training in Toledo, Ohio, to which several Odessa-trained cantors had gravitated: Simon Zemachson, Mendel Shapiro and Aryeh Leib Rutman, among them. In his teens he moved to New York for the purpose of studying with Joshua Lind, Jacob Rapaport, and Mordechai Hershman. In 1944 he succeeded David Roitman as cantor at Manhattan’s Shaare Zedek on West 93rd Street. In 1957 he was engaged by Grossinger’s Hotel in the Catskill Mountains resort area of upstate New York for all major holidays. This allowed him to guest-officiate and concertize widely, as well as to teach and compose. Over a period of 25 years he was featured in a weekly radio program on the Jewish Daily Forward’s station, WEVD, and for each show he wrote a new composition. The following appeared in his obituary:



If it seems strange that a cantor, even a lyric tenor known for his breathtaking improvisations, would be a headline attraction at a Catskills resort, it is at least partly because there has been a striking decline in the everyday appreciation of the timeless subtleties of Jewish liturgical music. There was a time when ordinary worshipers at a synagogue were so passionately familiar with the underlying music and so attuned to the styles, talents and limitations of the various cantors that they would discuss them endlessly, like opera buffs weighing the appeal of a Caruso or a Pavarotti.¹

Perhaps Ganchoff’s most enduring contribution to hazzanut in the 20th century and beyond was his teaching of succeeding generations for almost three decades at the Hebrew Union College’s School of Sacred Music in Manhattan. One of the student he influenced is Jack Mendelson, a past president of the

1 Robert McG. Thomas Jr., “Moshe Ganchoff is Dead at 92; Cantor in the Odessa Tradition,” *New York Times*, August 18, 1997.

Cantors Assembly. Mendelson has, in turn, carried the torch of Ganchoff's intellectual and musically intricate approach to hazzanim in both the Conservative and Reform movements through courses taught at his own alma mater and at the Jewish Theological Seminary's H.L. Miller Cantorial School.

Ganchoff's durable tenor voice, silver-toned and broad-ranging, served as an accessible model to Mendelson and numerous other disciples, well beyond an age when most singers no longer even attempt to sustain a single phrase worthy of emulation. His singing, available on recordings of single prayers and entire sections of selected services, affords us a summary of what 20th-century hazzanut was all about. Most striking is the way he was able to break through the stultifying inevitability of verses that were recited every day of his listeners' lives—in some cases twice or three times daily. Somehow, he made those verses leap off the page and come startlingly alive in the awareness of those whom he led in prayer. That level of *t'fillah* exemplified the dictum of Rabbi Isaac Avraham Kook, first Chief rabbi of British-Mandated Palestine:

Ha-yashan yit-hadeish v'he-hadash yit-kaddeish

The old will be made new and the new will be made holy.

Moshe Ganchoff achieved this renovation/sacralization through the element of discovery. He revealed hidden meanings in the familiar words, spinning musical Midrash through unexpected shifts of mode and nuanced musical allusions to other times and events that our people has experienced over the course of its history. His hazzanut recalled that of every outstanding cantor of the past century. It rivaled, among others, the melodic inventiveness of Yossele Rosenblatt (1882-1933), the lyric vocalization of Mordechai Hershman (1888-1940), the facile coloratura of Berele Chagy (1892-1954), and the harmonic daring of David Kusevitsky (1911-1985).

When the text called for it, he would resort to dramatic breaks in the recitation-line à la Leib Glantz (1898-1964) or Pierre Pinchik (1900-1971), and his utilization of the *mezza di voce* reminded one of David Roitman (1884-1943). His improvisatory forays could roam as far afield as those of Aryeh Leib Rutman (1866-1935) or Alter Yehiel Karniol (1855-1928), constituting mini-recitatives unto themselves. Moshe Ganchoff brought his mastery of all these techniques to the compositions of his final years, the century's final decade as well. His *Hoshana even sh'tiyah* ("O save the Foundation Stone—site of Your Holy Temple"), recited on the Second Day of Sukkot, includes a section that Ganchoff called a *d'veikah* ("closeness to the Divinity"). It is a precious moment of going one-on-one with God, to the exclusion of all profane thoughts or virtuostic showiness. It occurs right after he pleads for return of the *Sh'khinah* (God's Presence) to Zion, the spot marked as *linat ha-tsedek*, the lodging-place of righteousness in this world.

O save the place from which Your glory went forth,
the Tabernacle of Peace to which pilgrims came...

Hoshana even sh'tiyyah

Text: *Sukkot* Liturgy

Music: Moshe Ganchoff
Arr: Joseph Ness
(Abridged Version, 8 min.)

Refrain

a tempo

Cantor

Ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, -

Piano

ppp

7

ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, ho - sha - na, -

hn. *pp*

3

Cel
or
Pno

Eng
hn
Bsn

13

ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, - ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na,

hn.

Brs

Hrr

19

Cantor

ho - sha - na. ho - sha - na e - ven sh' - tiy -

St →

Tbn

25

comodo

yah ho - sha - na beit hab - b' - hi -

Strings

Pizz

31

rall.

rah ho - sha - na

a tempo

ho - sha - na,

Brass

gliss.

36

ho - sha - na go-ren or - nan ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na d'

Ob & Bsn
Fls & Cls
Hn

* to Refrain

40

vir ham-muts-na ho - sha - na ho-sha - na

rit.

Tutti
Eng. Hm.

* to Refrain

44

har ham-mo-ri-yah v' - har_yei-ra - eh ho - sha - na,

f

3

Strings
Tbn

47 *con moto*

ho - sha - na z' - vul - tif - ar - te - kha ho - sha - na ha - nah - da - vid - ho - sha - na;

Oboe

con moto

Strings

50

ho - sha - na

& Hp.

mf

54

tov hal - l' - va - non ho - sha - na y' -

57

fei - nof m' - sos kol - ha - a - rets ho - sha - na, ho -

60

sha-na k'li - lat yo - fi ho - sha - na,

64

ho - sha - na, ho - sha - na li - nat ha-tse - dek

68

Religioso *simile*

ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na,

73

ho - sha - na, ho - sha - na, ho - sha -

77

a tempo & in rhythm

-na; ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na ma-khon l'-shiv-t'-kha ho-sha-na

82

* to Refrain (next pg.) * Refrain

a tempo

ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na n'-veih sha-a-nan_ ho-sha-na. Ho-sha-na,

Strings & Bell
ppp (Cld Vla)

87

ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na, ho-sha-na ho-

Hn

93

sha - na; ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, ho-sha - na, ho - sha - na, ho-sha-na,

sp Strings

99

ho - sha - na, ho - sha - na Ho-sha-na suk - kat_sha-leim a-liy-

Oboe

104

yat sh'-va-tim ho - sha - na, pin - nat yik-rat ho - sha - na, tsi-

p *molto dim*

106

yon ha - m' tsuy - ye - net ho - sha - na, ho - - - sha - na, tsi -

pp — *ppp* — *pppp*

109

yon ha - m' - tsu - ye - net ho - sha - na ho - sha - - -

-ten. *3* *rit. espr.* *3*

112

- na ko - desh hak - ko - da - shim

3 *3* *3*

115 *ad lib* optional *tr* *subito p*

ho-sha - - - - - na, ho-sha na, -

ff *subito p*

119

ho-sha-na, ho - sha - na, ho - sha -

f Brass

123 *espr.*

na ra - tsuf a-ha-vah ho-sha - na, sh'khi-

f

126

Con brio

nat_k' vo-de-kha ho-sha - na, _____ ho-sha-na sh'-khi-nat k'-vo-de-kha

130

Relig. **Maestoso**

ho - - - - sha _____ na teil talp-pi-

134

tenuto

yot _____ ho-sha - na. _____



The Current State of Hazzanut in the UK

By Geoffrey L. Shisler

In 1968 I started my career as hazzan in a part-time post in a small shul, and although the names of the hazzanim of London were familiar to me, I did not know them personally. My first full-time position was in the famous New Synagogue, Egerton Road, Stamford Hill, London where years earlier, Jacob Goldstein and Ephraim (*Fischel*), (Rosenberg) had successively occupied the Bimah. Needless-to-say, in 1970 when I became hazzan there, the shul was past its prime (else I wouldn't have gotten the position!), but it still had a very good regular choir, and many locals would come specially for the S'firat Ha-omer and S'lihot services...

At this time I joined the Association of Ministers-Hazzanim of Great Britain and got to know all the London cantors, and many of the Provincial ones too. At that time practically every major congregation in the country had a full-time hazzan (the United Synagogue, of whom the Chief Rabbi is the titular head, used to call us 'Readers'), and there were some very fine ones amongst them too. To mention just a few, there were Hazzanim Pinchas Faigenblum, Charles Lowy, Moshe Korn, Simon Hass and Yehudah Landenberg, each an outstanding exponent of hazzanic art.

The United Synagogue alone employed 42 hazzanim, and that's apart from those employed by other synagogal bodies. Today it employs—one! Cantor Moshe Haschel is now the only full-time bearer of the tradition of hazzanut in London, besides a handful of part-timers who are businessmen, dentists and members of other professions. The stark truth is that, while some lovers of hazzanut remain in this country, the majority of shul goers no longer want to hear the kind of service that I was brought up on. They have scant knowledge of *nusah ha-t'fillah*, and no interest in it. They wouldn't care if the one who is conducting the service sang the Kedushah to *Auld Lang Syne* (and I wouldn't be surprised if some of them do!), as long as they get it over and done with quickly.

Sadly, the formal style of service that served Anglo-Jewry for so many years has all but disappeared. Sadder still, precious few of our 300,000 Jews in Britain even care. There are various reasons for this, and I think it's instructive to examine them.

First and foremost, in my view, is the influence of Israel. There are only a few synagogues in Israel today where one can hear a fine hazzan with a well-trained choir. All shuls start davening early in the morning (certainly by comparison with shuls outside of Israel), and the intention of the participants is get out as soon as possible. It almost seems that the more observant a Jew is, the faster he wants to get his davening over and done with!

This attitude has had a powerful influence on us. A generation ago, youngsters went to Israel to discover that you don't need to have a professionally trained hazzan to conduct the service. Any Jew who can read Hebrew tolerably well (and sometimes even that's not a requirement) might be permitted to do so. This is a far cry from the synagogue where only the rabbi or hazzan ('Reader') was permitted, by the by-laws of the United Synagogue, to act as *sh'liah tsibbur*. This laissez-faire stance found favour with vast numbers of the youngsters, many of whom left from middle-of-the-road Jewish homes, and came back unwilling to eat their own mother's cooking any longer! It is now quite unusual to encounter a regular shul-going young man or woman who will own up to a love of hazzanut.

The second reason for the demise of hazzanut in the UK is the abysmal ignorance of *nusah ha-t'fillah* amongst the new generation of rabbanim. There is no institution training men for the Anglo-Jewish Ministry in the UK any more. When I studied hazzanut at Jews' College with Reverend Leo Bryll (z"l) in the mid 1960s, students in the Rabbinical Training Programme had to attend a session in *nusah ha-t'fillah* every week. This meant that, even if they couldn't sing, they were given a basic grounding in our sacred traditional melodies and an appreciation of their importance, and they would not allow someone to stand before the Amud unless he was familiar with them.

Jews' College has long gone and there is not one single institution in the UK that trains young men for the Anglo-Jewish rabbinate. Almost every rabbi who has qualified in the past ten years and who occupies a British pulpit has been trained in Israel or has a *s'mikhah* from Chabad. I hardly

have to add that, whatever melodies Chabad might claim as nusah are far removed from the synagogal traditions of Anglo-Jewry.

When Rabbis are abysmally ignorant of our musical heritage and have no interest in it and hence no desire to become familiar with it, they could not care less what melodies are used in our services “as long as the congregation likes them!” I have actually heard a prominent rabbi in the UK state that it’s more important that the people join in with the singing than that the person who is leading the service sings the “correct” tune. It has never occurred to this man that, if the correct tune was sung, it would only be a few weeks before the congregation knew it and was singing it!

The third reason for the demise of the full-time hazzan in the UK was, sad to say, brought on by the hazzanim themselves. The fact is that they never made themselves indispensable. Apart from the “Star” hazzanim who, like all artistes at the top end of their profession can make all sorts of demands of their star-struck employers, the ordinary hazzan is also expected to function in a ministerial capacity for the six days of the week when he’s not “performing.” Many cantors realized this in the U.S., but unfortunately, most in the UK did not. They would come to shul for the Shaḥarit minyan—most days—and attend a funeral, shivah or stone setting (“unveiling” in the U.S.) with the rabbi, and if they really had to, visit someone in hospital. But by and large, that was it.

As it became harder and harder to raise funds from the membership to support two full-time ministerial officials, in many synagogues the management started to ask if they could actually cope without the hazzan. When they looked very carefully, they realized that they could—and in most cases quite easily.

Had these hazzanim immersed themselves totally in the life of their congregation, teaching adults and children, running social and educational programs and instigating initiatives to help move their community forward, when they came to retire, their congregations would have seen how vital it was to have a second minister to care for the people. This not being the case, hardly any shul saw the need to replace their hazzan, and have now gone for the popular “Assistant Rabbi” or even Youth Worker. If the hazzan had fulfilled one of these roles, he—and his position—would have become indispensable.

The sad thing is that even the large communities have no regular hazzan. Where not so long ago we had Hershtick in Finchley, Malovany in Edgware,

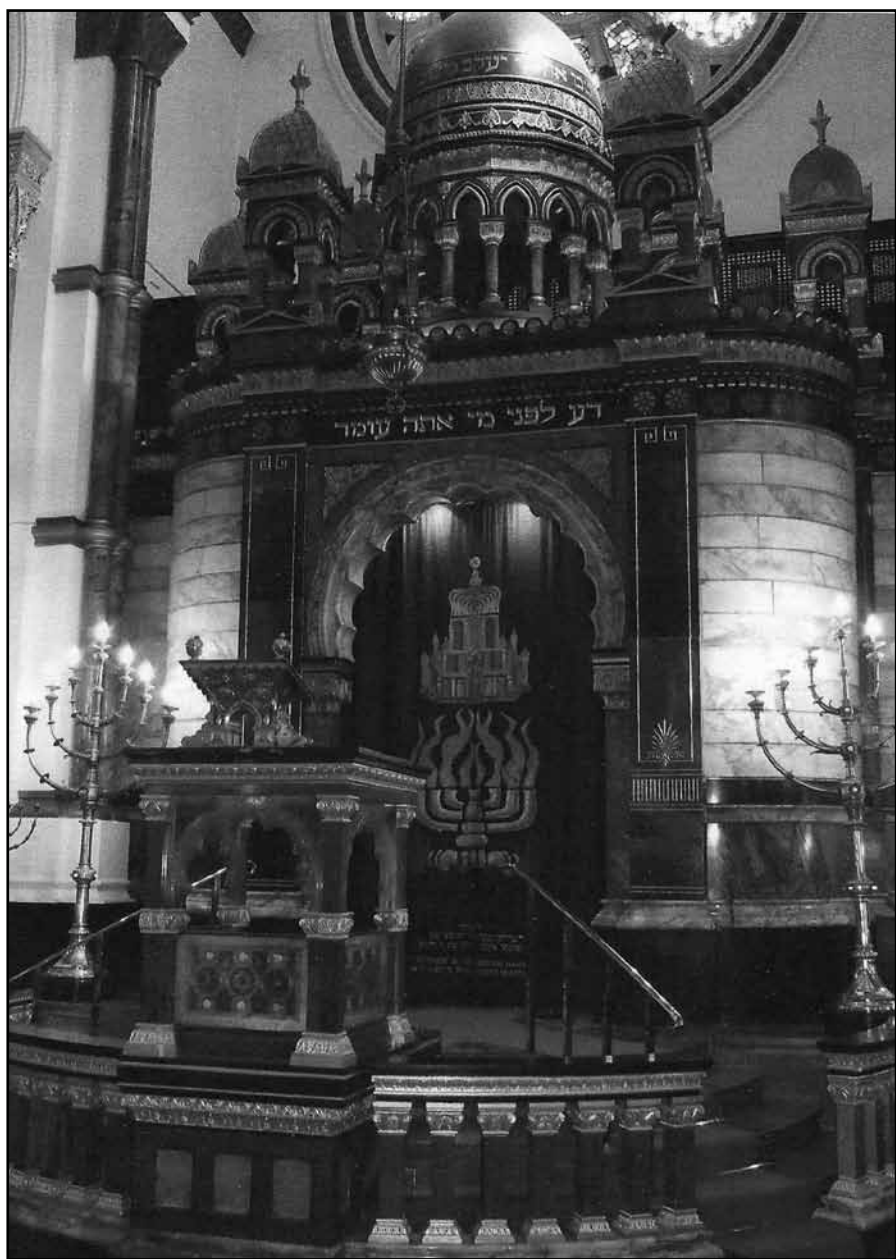
Hass in the Central and Korn in Hendon, not one of these communities has a full-time hazzan any longer. *Eikh naflu gibborim!* (“How the mighty have fallen”; Second Samuel 1).

And so we struggle on. I have recently become involved with an organization called Tephilharmonic (www.Tephilharmonic.com) which was set up to try and educate the shul-going public about the importance of *nusah ha-t'fillah*. It's very early days, but we can still work and hope that it may make some impression, however small. In the meantime, those of us who truly love the art of hazzanut have to be satisfied with the occasional visit to these shores from one of the international super-stars.

Even that expedient yields mixed results. Where once Moshe Koussevitzky could fill the Royal Albert Hall (capacity 7,000) for a concert, it is now a struggle to half-fill a shul with a capacity of 1,200 for any cantorial concert whatsoever. There is no hazzan in the world today—no matter how accomplished—who could attract this number of people to a single appearance here.

I am sorry to say there is no sign that anything will improve significantly; the simple truth is that hazzanut in Great Britain is rapidly becoming little more than a subject for nostalgic reminiscence.

Geoffrey L. Shisler, who serves as Rabbi at the New West End Synagogue in Bayswater, London, UK, is always eager to share hazzanic lore and information via email: << Rav@shisler.com >>.



New West End Synagogue,
Bayswater, London, UK

The Current State of Hazzanut in The Netherlands

By Jeffrey P. Lieuwen

I'm sorry to say that the "revival" of hazzanut hasn't really spread to this part of the world. In my particular area, Rhenen, a small city in the heart of the country, there isn't any hazzanut at all. That is because Rhenen has no Jewish community, nor is there an active synagogue within approximately 20 miles.

There are only a few professional hazzanim in The Netherlands. The services are led mainly by laymen and hardly anyone remembers traditional Dutch nusah. An authority on the subject—and the most famous hazzan here—is Dr. Hans (*Yosef ben mikhael*) Bloemendal. He served as the *Hazzan rishon* of the Orthodox community in Amsterdam for many years, and if he hasn't already retired, he will probably be doing so very soon.

The only other professional hazzan whom I know is Ken Gould of the Liberal Jewish community (you would call it Reform) in The Hague. Here we use the terms Orthodox and Liberal. We don't have Reform or Conservative; either you're [modern] Orthodox—the Orthodox community here can be seen mainly as Conservative—or you're Liberal.

The Jewish community of The Netherlands is rather small (the majority perished during the Shoah) and most people with a Jewish background are not religious—most of the Dutch are secular. For many members of the Jewish community, affiliation has nothing to do with religion. For them, being "Jewish" is more a "traditional" thing. The main group of Dutch religious Jews live in and around Amsterdam, with smaller communities in Zwolle and Enschede.

We do have a rich choral history and some good choirs still exist: *het Amsterdams Synagogaal Chor* (the Amsterdam Synagogue Choir) and *Santo Servizio* (the choir of the Sephardic community in Amsterdam). The latter, inactive since the Shoah, was revived in 2003. *JSM* readers can find more information at the following links: www.asl-choir.org; www.santoservicio.nl (available only in Dutch, but worth a look).

Jeffrey P. Lieuwen has written extensively on the culminating phase of the European cantorate in general and the development and growth of Yiddish Theatre in Poland during the early 20th century. He can be contacted at <<jp82lieuwen@hetnet.nl>>.



Interior of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam,
oil painting by Emanuel de Witte, 1680

The State of Ashkenazic Liturgical Music in Israel Today

By Raymond G. Goldstein

Various accounts of liturgical music-making in Israel have been written over the years, the current author himself having contributed an essay on the subject over a decade ago.¹ Since then many changes have occurred in the music that Israelis hear in synagogue or concert hall. Among the chief determinants for these changes is taste, a very individual thing, tempered by social and geographical situations. What is accepted by the Israeli religious establishment is not necessarily in line with the taste of the secular Israeli Jew, which may differ radically from that of his or her American or European counterpart.

As is well known, Orthodoxy here in Israel claims to represent the mainstream of Judaism. Although some inroads have been made by the Conservative and Reform movements, this article will restrict itself to the worship rite practiced by most shul-going Israelis.

I happen to be a former South African who grew up in the rich liturgical tradition of European Jewry—east and west. Truth to tell, I still regard myself as an outsider when approaching the various aspects of traditions adhered to here in Israel. As is the case elsewhere in the Jewish world, the lack of available financial support or even interest from the general public here has not exactly helped the perpetuation of traditional synagogue music as I knew it in my youth.

At the time of this writing, the Feher Jewish Music Centre at the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv has been closed down. In addition, the various folklore departments of the Israeli Broadcasting Authority have cancelled their projects of recording and preserving Yiddish, Ladino and cantorial music, and have reduced the broadcasting of existing materials. Instead, they are relying on replays of Golden Age hazzanut selections—by the original performers and by an increasing number of modern imitators. And despite their continuing popularity with listeners, gone are the days when the public could experience complete broadcasts of cantorial concerts.

Thus we must be grateful to institutions like the Jewish Music Research Center at Hebrew University and the Tel Aviv Cantorial Institute for their ongoing promotion of all things liturgical—be it in publications, recordings or live performances. Liturgical concerts are still supported by:

1 Raymond Goldstein, "Ashkenazi Liturgical Music in Israel Today," *The Performance of Jewish and Arab Music in Israel Today, Part 1*, Amnon Shiloah, ed. (Harwood Academic Publications, 1997).

- 1) large municipalities who have decent *Tarbut-toranit* (“Torah culture”) departments, in which case a lot depends on the personal invention of the mayor or his municipal council;
- 2) liturgical male choirs and their conductors who often organize their own concerts and sell tickets together with their municipalities;
- 3) cantorial schools who wish to promote their own students by inviting famous “names” to appear as guest artists on their programs; and
- 4) commercial impresarios who will promote and present still-popular cantorial programs on a for-profit basis.

The result of all this is that concerts of hazzanut are always well attended, particularly when they are offered gratis or at relatively inexpensive prices. Audiences may range anywhere from 200 to 3,000 people, a number which the Classical-recital industry in this country can only envy.

Although keyboard remains the cheapest form of accompaniment for cantorial music, a recent trend—considered misguided in some quarters—has emerged for full orchestral backing at such events. This quasi-“operatic” experience has apparently found favor among religiously minded folk, but it has imposed certain musical restrictions upon the performing artists by disrupting the momentum of a given recitative through the regular insertion of instrumental interludes, besides adding enormously to the overall cost of each concert.

The current author has sought to reconcile both worlds by arranging accompaniments for chamber-sized groups such as a quartet of flute, clarinet/oboe, cello/bassoon and keyboard. This way, wherever necessary, the cantor can enjoy a measure of improvisational freedom while the overall performance still conveys a “symphonic” impression. And the cost is exponentially smaller than it would be for a massive orchestra.

Viewed objectively, the hazzanic repertoire performed at concerts seems trapped in some type of time warp. This is because of an overwhelming popular demand for traditional *skarboveh* (“treasured”) works deriving from Eastern Europe. Western European compositions or modernistic harmonies in concerts are frowned upon by a public that finds them too *goyish* (“non-Jewish”) in style. As a result, the most sought-after hazzanic concertizers have become “Gramophone” cantors. This is due partially to their unfamiliarity with more recent—and therefore not-yet-recorded—repertoire, and partially to their unfamiliarity with the vast body of printed hazzanic material (inaccessible to them because they lack basic sight-reading skills). It’s not as if the latest material is not available—ironically, Israel has excellent institutional

and private libraries—it's more the hard fact that today's cantors can enjoy considerable success by simply rote-learning and repeating what was done by their antecedents!

The bottom line: a new form of cantorial composition—the recorded recitative extended through choral/instrumental responses—has produced a “new and improved” version of the Golden Age repertoire and obviated the need or desire for original works.

As to the question of liturgical choirs, it is a touchy issue in Israel of the 21st century. There are the “*Pirkhei*” boy choirs and their commercialized brand of Israeli *Hasidut* in unison or two-part harmony. Because of the problems encountered in training often boisterous and undisciplined young boys—and since Orthodox religious practice prohibits the sound of female voices in public—choral synagogue repertoire for adults is limited to arrangements for men alone. In the past, mixed arrangements for SATB were used verbatim—with Second tenor singing above the First tenor melody line—resulting in a consistently muddy sound.

The standard of performance also varies considerably due to a lack of genuine sight-reading abilities among the participants. In this regard, choral singing of *secular* music is of a far higher quality; synagogue choral music in Israel must often be simplified to the point where it can be performed in some manner at all. Professional synagogue choirs are few and far between, the choir of the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem being a significant exception.

A number of small itinerant choirs—usually consisting of quartets or octets, together with the popular cantor(s) of the day—make the rounds throughout the country in the style of “a khazn oyf shabbes” (as the old folk song has it). They generally appear at the paid request of some benefactor who desires to have a special event in his synagogue commemorated. In this fashion many such chamber groups along with their itinerant cantors find work—just as their forebears in Eastern Europe did more than a century earlier. Interestingly, this revived folk custom is once again proving very popular not only in the big cities but in smaller towns and kibbutzim as well.

Nonetheless, in most Israeli synagogues—particularly the small and informal one-room *shtiblekh*—the musical component of worship is unfortunately at an all-time low. Most minyanim want the *ba'al t'fillah* to do the service at a fast speed with the further stipulation: “no khazonus!” The excuse is that the congregation has come to pray and not to attend a concert! Patience is certainly not an Israeli virtue; so that for a dignified “musical” service the average Jew must go to a larger synagogue, and even then it's a question of

luck. Adherence to traditional nusah also leaves a lot to be desired, through sheer lack of interest—or knowledge—on the part of most worshipers.

For any hope of improving this lamentable situation we must look to the few training schools for hazzanim that exist in this country. Leading the field is the Tel Aviv Cantorial Institution under the caring guidance of Hazzan Naftali Herstik. There, great emphasis is placed on correct usage of a prayer mode appropriate to the occasion, accurate interpretation of the text, and proper placement of word-stresses in both Ashkenazic and Sephardic pronunciations. To further complicate matters, there is currently a demand among the ultra-Orthodox for Ashkenazic pronunciation, while the larger synagogues still adhere to the Sephardic pronunciation. This factor in itself can play an important role in the musical interpretation of a piece.

The Tel Aviv school also boasts an excellent choir, maintaining that any qualified cantor should know how it is “to be on the other side of the fence” when guest-officiating with an incumbent choir in their home synagogue. Students are exposed to a wide repertoire of musical settings for the yearly cycle of liturgy, which enables them to perform not only with chorus but also with chamber or orchestral ensembles if the need should arise. It is therefore not surprising that a majority of young Israeli cantors are among the leading performers on stage not only in this country but also abroad.

In conclusion I must state that despite all the obstacles—when a “big name” is officiating in a large synagogue or if a large Kiddush repast has been announced for after the service—a large crowd will still flock to the particular sanctuary. If that is what it takes to attain success, I’m all for it.

Capetown-born Raymond Goldstein joined the faculty of the Jerusalem Rubin Academy of Music in 1978, and was later appointed senior teacher at the Tel Aviv Cantorial Institute. As a musical director/accompanist he appears frequently on stage, radio and television, having collaborated in over 200 recordings with international cantors and singers. His oeuvre includes more than 1800 orchestrations of sacred and secular works, and the composition of a chamber opera, two cantatas, and a concert Kabbalat Shabbat service.



The Great Synagogue in Jerusalem

How Should We Train the Cantors of the Future?

Adapted from a CA Convention Symposium

Scott Sokol:

I began my career not as a cantor in professional life, but as a research psychologist and a professor. Education has, therefore, always been central to my own professional mission and, at this point, I've had a couple of decades' experience teaching graduate level and professional schools. When tasked to create a graduate cantorial program, I realized, as we all did, that the golden age of the pulpit artist was likely behind us. I believe that never having experienced that golden age as a practitioner freed me somewhat from any undue nostalgia, and by that I mean no disrespect, just in the sense of going back to what no longer was. Instead, I took this reality as an opportunity. If participation was to be the new name of the game, well, then, I figured our students should be able to participate in a very high level and be able to educate others to participate. And so I knew that education was going to be an important part of what we did at Hebrew College. Of course, I knew that most cantors are already Jewish educators, but I also knew that most played that role more from gut instinct and effective improvisation than from actual planning, training and teaching. I remembered the words often quoted to me by *Moreinu he-hazzan* Max Wohlberg, *zikhrono livrakhah*, that the best improvisation is a planned improvisation. So I decided that our graduates would indulge in a lot of planning by actually training as educators.

We don't have all of the students doing this, but most of our students are in what we call the cantor-educator track. The impetus for this idea of *hazzan-m'haneikh* was basically that our graduates would receive their ordination, but their Master's degree would not be in Sacred Music nor even in Jewish Studies, but rather in Jewish Education. Moreover, they would take, in addition to general education courses, specific targeted courses at the intersection of Jewish music and Jewish education: things like: "Teaching and Facilitating T'fillah," "B'nei Mitzvah Pedagogy" and "Topics in Jewish Music Education." Along with these we offer courses like "Keva vs. Kavannah: The Dialectic of Prayer Leading."

The second trend that I saw was trans-denominationalism. Hebrew College has been that from the beginning. The motivation behind such a school is based on at least three intersecting goals. The first of these goals is simply to serve trans-denominational or nondenominational congregations. There is an ever-growing number of these congregations and communities, for

whatever reasons, that wants to be served by rabbis and cantors who have a broad and unconstrained viewpoint on ritual practice.

Another reason for the trans-denominational approach is pedagogical. Our students learn traditional nusah, cantorial recitative and cantillation, and they also study contemporary repertoire. But more than the subject matter of trans-denominational education, the pedagogy I refer to has to do with our students who are, themselves, from different denominational backgrounds. In the same classroom, we have Orthodox, Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative and a great number of the New Age or Renewal denominations. They study in the same classes, they talk with each other about their backgrounds, they force each other to unpack assumptions about their ritual practice and their religious beliefs. In so doing, I really believe that they come away with a richer perspective on their emerging worlds as cantors and rabbis.

The third reason for offering a trans-denominational program is a spiritual one. Many of our students come not knowing what they are. They don't feel like they can conform to the mold of a denomination, and part of why they're in school is to figure out where they are and where they want to ultimately be. Many will choose to affiliate themselves either with Reform or Conservative congregations, but others will choose not to limit their personal identity or the domains where they serve. They may serve a Reform congregation and a Conservative congregation at the same time.

The final trend that really influences my thinking about this is that many of us find ourselves in sole-practitioner situations, especially in smaller congregations. And so, in addition to the cantor-educator program, from the very beginning, I also wanted to start a dual (or hyphenated, if you prefer) ordination track of rabbi-cantor. I'm hopeful that this year we finally will actually be doing that. We've already started the process, offering it in a reasonable frame of time—seven years. Our hope is that we will have students who will complete it, as well as those who will not necessarily dually ordain, but will study seriously enough so that we'll have rabbis who know nusah, and hazzanim who know texts.

My hope for the future of this profession is that cantorial and rabbinical education in this country will adopt a model more akin to other professions, namely an unyoking of the professional school from the movement-centered professional organization. After all, when you study to be a lawyer you go to the law school that best meets your needs—whether it's geographical or philosophical—and then you take the Bar exam where you want to practice in law. Similarly in medical education, there was a time when the hospital you studied in was the hospital you worked in. That is no longer the case. I

think there's no reason why our professions can't do that as well. Of course, there will always be a closer and important relationship between the Miller School and the Cantors Assembly and between HUC and the ACC. That's natural and it should be expected. But I frankly think that if others who really are serious and have studied want to enter these professions, we should let them do so in terms of the professional organizations, making sure they know what we expect them to know for our particular organization. The knowledge, the skills, the experiences need to be there, but frankly, the politics don't need to be there.

Nathan Lam:

Our post-denominational school started in 2001 with a heavy emphasis on Jewish Renewal. We took the curricula from JTS and HUC, looked them over and put together a curriculum that combined many of the similar ideas from both schools. Ours is a five-year program: 210 units, a thesis and a recital required at the end. We are affiliated with the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, for accreditation purposes. That has actually helped me to focus on an idea of how to change the curriculum. Why? Because we're looking at every class in terms of: "what is the exit strategy?" We're looking at a learning outcome: "what are we producing at the end of five years?"

I totally agree that the Assembly and the ACC need to look at these new models instead of making it difficult for our graduates, because the big elephant in both organizations is the lack of jobs. Yet, there *are* jobs available. I'm looking at the fact that we are not providing people who can be cantors for three-to-five-hundred family congregations. That's who we have to go after, because more than half of the congregations in this country don't have cantors. We have to find a way of providing cantors who serve their needs. Instead of having them get an assistant rabbi, we should be ordaining cantors who have been provided with enough text study and ability to teach many different subjects. It's education, but education with a different spin.

Some of our students are right out of college, others are pursuing their Master's degree in some related subject. We have other people who are physicians, all types of second-career people, looking at the cantorate in a much different way. The question is: "how do you make what we are teaching relevant to the 21st century?" One of the things our late and beloved executive vice-president Sam Rosenbaum said in one of his speeches was that the cantorate was changing—in his day—every 20 years.

Since Sam's day the cantorate has morphed itself. We are now looking at a cantorate that has changed every two or three years, out of necessity and through self-awareness. Yes, we have to be *ba'alei nusah*. That means some of

the classes will be really specific. But that's not what our congregants are looking for, and therefore, that's perhaps not what we want to teach our students.

Looking at nusah, I have to say that some of the *piyyutim* on Rosh Hashanah may be not as important as others. Maybe we have to start looking at different types of models even for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. *Yamim nora'im*, which were sacrosanct musically, are now being invaded by the repertoire of Friday Night Live, by the Unplugged Friday night. Even Shabbat morning is morphing itself into that. The High Holy Days were not—until now.

Looking at our nusah curriculum, I think we have to take a different tack and say, “what is it that we want these people to go out with?” I think we want them to be an educator, a facilitator, an expert and a producer—a producer of *events*. Our event is called “Shabbat”—and unlike the Cineplex—we are producers of *sacred* events. I hate the word Cineplex, which seems to turn us into a mall-theater with ten different films. I don't like that. I think that we are producers of *sacred* events.

Another consideration is that if you don't train students to be able to relate to the people they're serving, they will not have jobs. I don't care how much nusah they know. I don't care how musical they are. I don't care how great their voice is. Relevancy means that if we train you to be a pulpit cantor, here is what you need to know. You have to know how to give a speech. You have to know how to look at texts. Text has to turn you on. Midrash has to turn you on and you have to be able to turn people on with that.

And, I tell my students that along with learning all of the things that we require of them, they have to know one additional subject that they will study on their own. I don't care what the subject is. They have to know how to study something on their own to become an expert at it—whether it's Jewish film, whether it be Jewish music, whether it be a certain part of Jewish history, Israeli music—something they can teach on their own that sets them apart from all the rest of the people on their staff.

The last point is that we have to be the source people on the synagogue staff so when they're considering cutting the liturgy and they say, “well, what was this put in here for?”—“why *Ohilah la-eil?*” or “why that nusah?”—you have to know the reason why, and if you don't know, at least you should know where to find out why and how to answer. We just can't do it in 210 units and five years. For me then, the goal is to say, “what is it that's going to make that person successful, marketable and keep the job?”

Henry Rosenblum:

We are going through a time of enormous transition. The cantorates that we are each engaged in are different one from the other, and therefore, at JTS we have decided that the “hyphenated-cantorate” has become a reality. Whether you are a cantor-educator, a cantor-executive director, a cantor-pastor or a cantor-music director, each and every one of those is ultimately a valid way of serving the needs of the Jewish community. Because we did not feel that every student at JTS was necessarily cut out to be one particular type of hybrid, we’ve tried to offer different courses that will give somebody a basic skill-set in a lot of different areas, and if you choose to then study in greater depth in one of those particular areas, that may be the way in which you are most successful.

For example, every student in the Miller Cantorial School chooses between three optional courses in Jewish education. If we felt that every student was capable of being an educator in terms of heading a Hebrew school or running a Hebrew high school program, then we would have made all three Education courses a requirement. We chose not to. It’s the hybrid we’re after: the cantor who is strong in synagogue skills in terms of reading Torah, teaching others to read Torah, Haftarah, leading *t’fillot* and empowering others. If you are the expert who can *teach others*, our feeling was that would make you the most important contributor to the musical and ritual life of your congregation.

We are redoing a curriculum which has been pretty standard for almost the 50 years of the school’s history, and putting it aside in order to approach the education of hazzanim as a blank slate. There’s a natural inclination to argue: “how can we not have this area of study?” Or, “how could we possibly have a well-trained cantor who doesn’t know this material?” So every time we wipe the slate clean, we suddenly discover all sorts of new imprints on it.

On the one hand you have *torah lishmah*. There are people who want to learn what our schools have to offer and I think it’s incumbent upon us to train such people. But we also have to consider: “when I accept students in the school, am I guaranteeing them employability when they finish going to school?” If somebody comes in with what I feel is a skill-set that could make them employable, I’m prepared to train them. But we can’t guarantee they’re going to get a job. Our hope is that the people who are educated well, the ones who have a varied skill-set, can find employment somewhere. There are places for cantors to be employed where we have just not scratched the surface yet. There is no reason why *roshei t’fillah* in Jewish day schools must, by definition, be rabbis. It makes no sense. It also makes no sense that syna-

gogues seek to hire an assistant rabbi instead of a cantor, when our product can fill that additional spot within the synagogue hierarchy.

Nathan Lam:

On the other hand, there have been times when we had not enough cantors to satisfy the job market. We trained cantors and they couldn't get jobs. But we trained them anyway. You look at the Cantors Assembly and see how people became members after passing the marathon tests we gave them over the years; it was a Catch 22. People had to be a cantor for five or seven years before they could take the test, but they got into the Cantors Assembly without that education. They had to have a job and they had to take the test seven years after they already had the job. It was an interesting model.

I totally agree with Henry; I think that the problem here is not necessarily how many people we have been training, it's how we approach a changing market. I see a future where there will be more cantors going back to rabbinic school and getting a dual ordination. It makes totally no sense for a congregation of 300-to-500 families to hire an assistant rabbi. But if he or she has a guitar and they're playing and they're doing song leading, it looks like and smells like it kind of has a feeling of what's going on. Jews in our day and age see what other places do. If it looks successful, they want to copy that. The best people, if they're trained well, will always get jobs.

The successful cantor is the eclectic person, the one who takes the best of every model that is out there and finds a way of incorporating it. You cannot close yourself off to any of the different styles and modes that are out there, you must allow yourself to have another point of access to members of your congregation. The more tools you have, the greater the likelihood is that you will be relevant.

Stephen J. Stein:

Knowing that cantors of the future are being trained that way, if we're aware that certain congregations are looking to hire an assistant rabbi, we try to encourage them that the cantor would be a different, better path to follow. We're out there talking to congregations all the time about exactly what's been discussed here, especially in terms of the development of new positions. When we know a congregation is trying to decide whether they want an assistant rabbi or a hazzan, of course we point out to them that if they hire an invested hazzan, that person likely can do all the things an assistant rabbi can do—in addition to singing the services and doing all the musical and inspirational things a cantor does.

We had a situation in my neighboring Reform congregation, where the hazzan was let go and they decided: “We don’t need a cantor, we’ll hire an assistant rabbi.” After four years they realized it had been a terrible mistake to hire an assistant rabbi, because it forced them to also engage a cantorial soloist. They have now hired a recent graduate from the cantorial school at Hebrew Union College.

Henry Rosenblum:

One proof of the way in which cantorial students have risen in the eyes of their rabbinic colleagues has to do with the presence of cantorial students at minyan at JTS. The cantorial student who was a stranger to daily minyan, no matter what that person could do or bring to the table, was not viewed as someone who took *yiddishkeit* seriously. As cantorial students over the past few years assumed much more of a presence at daily minyan, they have become true *hevruta* partners with their rabbinical school colleagues. The graduating *siyyum* no longer has to be limited to a joint study of Talmudic text. Rabbinical students who had been doing it for five years at least, and cantorial students who are just beginners in text study are not on an equal footing. In their *hevruta* study, the rabbinical student taught the cantorial student and they’d present the text together at the *siyyum*. That relationship was doomed from the beginning. There’s been an initiative started for the nature of the *siyyum* to be a different one. Students will be able to present *their own* areas of expertise as valid study. It’s just the beginning, but it’s a *major* change.

And, in an environment where a hazzan must be very careful not to incur jealousy or resentment on the part of his rabbi, we are also taking into consideration the fact that cantorial schools are now training the hazzan to do things that rabbis do, such as giving a *d’var torah* or occasional sermon.

Stephen J. Stein:

There are two factors at play here. One is: *an assistant rabbi is far more threatening to the senior rabbi than the hazzan*. So keep that in mind when the shul is thinking about an assistant rabbi—the hazzan is not a threat. I also found, in my congregation, that my rabbi is delighted by the fact that I deliver eulogies, because when there is a death and he’s on vacation, he doesn’t have to feel guilty for being gone. When there’s a death in your congregation, the family does not want some stranger giving the eulogy for their beloved mother or their beloved spouse. They want somebody who knows the family. I know, and I’m not the only one, that the rabbis I’ve worked with have been thrilled that I can give a eulogy so they don’t have to look over their shoulder when they’re out of town.

Scott Sokol:

I agree completely. Rabbis are really our most important advocates, both on the congregational level and also in the school. When we've made progress in my school, it's only been when the rabbinical students and faculty have seen that the cantorial students and cantorial faculty have a lot to offer them. When we do programs together, they see our perspective. We just recently did a High Holiday mini-mester for a week with our two schools. The responses I got were, "wow! I didn't know that," over something we were bringing to the table about the High Holiday practice. Having the senior rabbi as an advocate saying, "I want a cantor, I don't want an assistant rabbi," is really important.

Rabbis have been very quick, as they should be, to have music as part of their portfolios, especially if they're musically talented. We really need to be able to use text as part of *our* portfolio. We need to go where they are. They're coming to where we are; we need to not see these things as territorial, but to be really *collaborative*. We may approach music differently than they do, we may approach text differently than they do. I give a different type of *d'var torah* than my rabbi does. Both types are valid—but they're different. We need to speak each other's languages but always bring our own nuance to it. That's when our rabbinic colleagues will see that we offer something different and complementary—the ability and expertise to infuse emotional life into everything we do for the congregation.

Stephen J. Stein:

I believe all the points we have raised that would guide us in how best to train future cantors can be boiled down to one question, the answers to which will show us the path we should take: *How can we as educators best meet the different set of demands that recent religious and cultural shifts have made for and upon cantors?*

First, aside from the knowledge and skills they impart, our cantorial schools must begin producing a generation of hazzanim who either innately possess the charisma required for leadership or who can be nurtured to positively impact upon others through their own personalities. Accomplishing that alone should help considerably in bridging the gap between the way cantors of the future view their own effectiveness and the way others currently view it.

Secondly, our cantorial schools as well as their students must immediately address the issue of an increasing number of congregations with declining memberships finding themselves unable to continue affording a full-time hazzan. Our schools must recognize that there are roles their graduates will have to assume in order to secure jobs. Their students, long before they graduate,

will have to seriously consider earning a Masters degree in Jewish Education. Clearly, other hybrid possibilities exist as well. But a Cantor/Educator seems the most logical, because congregations that cannot afford a full-time cantor alone, may be able to budget for a full-time Cantor/Educator.

Finally, we should remain hopeful—knowing that everyone in the Jewish community is struggling to find a magic potion that will engage the young and disinterested. In this struggle we have as much of an opportunity for finding solutions as anyone else. That is because we as cantors have an amazing vehicle for impacting upon others, young and old alike. It is the power of music!

Scott Sokol is the former Director of the Graduate Cantorial Program at Hebrew College in Boston. Nathan Lam is Director of the Cantorial School at the Academy for Jewish religion in California. Henry Rosenblum is the former Dean of the H. L. Miller Cantorial School at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Stephen J. Stein is Executive Vice President of the Cantors Assembly. This article is adapted from a panel discussion on the same topic; Proceedings of the 61st Annual Cantors Assembly Convention, Kerhonkson, NY, June 16, 2008.



How I Conducted 300 High Priests

by Joseph Rumshinsky (1881-1956)

*This account of Rumshinsky's return to cantorial choir conducting after an absence of nearly 30 years during which he had immersed himself in the world of Yiddish Theatre, is excerpted from his 1944 autobiography, **Klangen fun mayn lebn** ("Sounds of my Life"; New York: A. Y. Biderman, pp. 721-724). It is translated from the original Yiddish by frequent Journal contributor David R. Prager, whose article, "The Hasidified World of Hazzanut Seen through the Eyes of an Analytical Cantorholic," appeared in the 2009 issue.*

In the same era (mid-1920s) that I undertook to lead choir rehearsals with the *Khazonim Farband* (Jewish Ministers Cantors Association) for my new composition "Oz Yoshir" and other works, I wrote an operetta, "Katinka," for which I created sixteen musical numbers. Of them, the one with the leitmotif '*Khken fargessen yeden, nur nit on dir* ("I can forget about everyone but not about you") and a soldiers' song *Marsh, marsh* ("March, March"), were the most popular. In the song '*Khken fargessen yeden, nor nit on dir*, sung by Molly Picon, was a phrase expressing the thought that she could forget even about G-d but not about him—meaning her beloved. I received a deluge of protest letters asking how the song could dare refer to forgetting about G-d. The most notable fact was that many young people, American lads and lasses, complained. As a result, I amended the song and removed the offending phrase.

In the evenings, I conducted rehearsals with the *Khazonim Farband* choir after almost a whole day's work with actors, chorus, individual chorus members and dancers. Indeed, at one theatre rehearsal instead of saying, "Girls, please now let's begin the rehearsal," I misspoke and said, "*Khazntes* (female cantors), please now let's begin the rehearsal."

However, the rehearsals with the *Khazonim Farband* were celebratory and marvelous. They were not just rehearsals at which one learned items or got to know a composition or two. Each and every rehearsal was truly a concert, enjoyed by all participants—the cantors, the singers, the committee and me. The level of enthusiasm rose with every rehearsal. As each day passed in the

count-down to the concert, so rose the levels of excitement and nervousness as well as inter-cantorial competitiveness and professional rivalry.

The capable organizer Jacob Rapaport had already distributed the solos, and the soloist cantors were happy. An episode underscored the difficulty of programming *zogakhtsn* (cantorial prayer recitatives), which even the wisdom of Rapaport almost could not resolve. This was because in those days, besides the great living stars, were other, lesser mortals—also in the heyday of their careers—and each wanted to sing an item from the liturgy. Somehow, the diplomatic *Khazonim Farband* president, Rapaport, arranged matters so that that all the “high priests” (as I thought of them) were happy. Altogether, at that concert on Sunday night February 21, 1926, almost three-hundred voices (an army of generals, as I considered them) sang together with an orchestra of fifty professional musicians, mainly from the New York Symphony.

In the front row of the three hundred cantors and singers stood Yossele Rosenblatt, Mordechai Hershman, Israel Alter, Zavel Kwartin, Adolph Katchko, David Roitman, Abraham Shapiro, Berele Chagy, Israel Breeh and Jacob Jacobowitz. Zavel Zilberts and I would lead the ensembles in turn.

I had composed a musical fantasy for organ—based on prayer motifs—as an overture for the concert which took place a little over a year after Manhattan’s Mecca Temple first opened.¹ For this event the auditorium was filled with the greatest Jewish personalities of New York, press representatives, musicians, rabbis, business leaders, artists, actors and government officials. When all were in their seats, Jacob Rapaport appeared in front of the curtain. He announced in his strong, beautiful, resounding, baritone voice, *Od yosef hai!* (“Joseph [meaning me] still lives!”). “Indeed this Joseph,” he continued, “who for the past thirty years had been in Egyptian exile [meaning away from the cantorial world and deeply involved in Yiddish Theatre], has returned and is tonight with us. *Yosef hai!...*” and the curtain rose.

Upon that signal from their president, the three hundred massed singers who led so much of American Jewry in musical prayer lined up to perform. I came out. The wonderful concert began.

People generally like to speak with enthusiasm about the past and minimize the present. I have to admit that when I conducted this wonderful cantorial

1 The Mecca Temple, at 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues, was dedicated in late December of 1924. It would later become the New York City Center, home to the New York City Opera and New York City Ballet companies until they moved to Lincoln Center in the mid-1960s..

concert, I experienced tremendous excitement coupled with a nervous inner knowledge that such a musical force was meeting for the first time—and I feared also for the last time. This was because man is mortal and such a collection of cantorial artists will not emerge quickly again. Certainly, they cannot grow upon American soil. These were exiled singers imbued with European Jewish culture.

I harbor many pleasant memories from my long career. The cantorial concert at the Mecca Temple is one of the most sparkling of those moments.

The following must be noted. The two great cantorial artists, Yossele Rosenblatt and Mordechai Hershman, who sadly are no longer alive, bantered together good-naturedly at that concert. After Hershman had completed his intricate cantorial piece, there was, as usual, a good deal of applause; the audience clapped loud and long. Yossele Rosenblatt stood in the wings and waited, as he was scheduled to sing next. Coming offstage, Mordechai Hershman said to him, “You hear, *Berdeleh* (“Beardie”; referring to Yossele’s full beard and diminutive stature) how the public acclaims my singing!?”

Rosenblatt answered with a smile, “Beardie Yossele will now sing and declaim such that the public will forget *Mordekhele* (“Little Mordechai”)! When Rosenblatt ended his cantorial selection and the audience’s enthusiasm was phenomenal because his singing that night was extraordinarily virtuostic, Hershman came up to him and said, “*Yasher koyakh, berdeleh!* (Congratulations, Beardie!) You were true to your word. You made mincemeat of me. Excellent!”

It makes one’s heart heavy to realize that such golden voices—Jewish singers and precentors, have become silent for eternity. As for those still among the living, they have now become elderly. Regarding the new generation, I scarcely believe that in present day Europe and America, similar stars can again arise such as a Yossele Rosenblatt and a Mordechai Hershman...

*The concert that Rumshinsky describes raised \$10,000 to aid cantors in need. Its Program appeared in **The New York Times** the Sunday morning of the concert, February 21, 1926, in the “Amusements” section, p. x8:*

Cantors Association, evening, at the Mecca Temple.

Conductors, Zavel Zilberts and Joseph Rumshinsky.

Overture, “Egmont” Beethoven

Heje Im Pifiyos Zilberts

**Traditional airs, sung by Cantors J. Jacobowitz,
Moses Steinberg, Berele Chagy, A. Shapiro,
Adolph Katchko, Mordechai Hershman and Josef
Rosenblatt.**

Al Naharos Bovel Zilberts

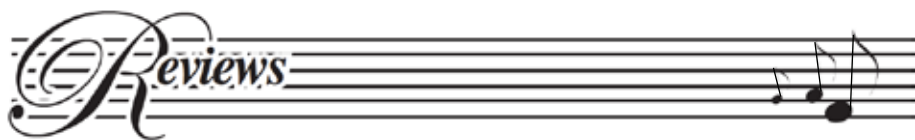
Havdolo Zilberts

Echoes of the Temple..... Rumshinsky

Air, “La Juive” Halevy

Oz Yoshir Rumshinsky

Yismach Moshe Rumshinsky



Katchko: Three Generations of Cantorial Art

Compiled by Deborah Katchko Gray

Edited and Produced by Velvel Pasternak

Tara Publications 2009, Companion CD included

Reviewed by Robert S. Scherr

What if you were able to sit at the side of a master hazzan, Adolph Katchko, one of the *g'dolim* of the twentieth century's Golden Age of hazzanut? While we cannot have that opportunity literally in the twenty-first century, his granddaughter, Hazzan Deborah Katchko Gray, brings us both the notes and the *ta'am* of this great hazzan and teacher through the composite work under review. Hazzan Gray has carefully transcribed original compositions by Adolph Katchko, and interpretations thereof by his son—her father, Theodore Katchko—so that generations of *ohavei hazzanut* can experience their artistry. Adolph Katchko was a master *ba'al nusah*, a natural improviser within the traditional prayer modes. Yet this book-and-CD should be valued not just for its transcriptions-and-recordings of the musical notes; it offers a *family reunion* as well as an important treasure of hazzanut.

The book's opening pages contain Hazzan Gray's personal reflections on her father's and grandfather's hazzanut. She transports us back half a century through Katchko's original writing along with many pages of accolades from appreciative colleagues, through which we come to know both the heart and mind of this revered hazzan and teacher. This section includes family pictures, plus articles her grandfather wrote. There's even a priceless undated photo of Adolph being mock-coached by Hazzan Zavel Kwartin atop a mountain in White Sulphur Springs, New York (**Figure 1**, see next page).

Other remembrances give contemporary readers loving insights into the meaning and impact of Adolph Katchko's art. In an introductory Appreciation, Hazzan Jack Mendelson recalls making a hospital visitation to someone in quite frail condition who, when told "the cantor is here to see you," looked up and said one word: "Katchko."

Adolph Katchko was a child prodigy as both a singer and conductor. He studied in Berlin under Alexander Heinemann, and later in Vienna under Adolph Robinson and Arthur Frank. He served as Chief Cantor at the Nozyk Synagogue in Warsaw, and later—in the same capacity—for the Jewish

community of Stenamangor, Hungary. He emigrated to New York City in 1921, occupying various pulpits until he was called to the Conservative Anshe Chesed Congregation in Manhattan, where he served for 24 years until his retirement.

One of the articles in this volume, “Changing Conceptions of Hazzanut,” originated as an address delivered before the Second Annual Convention of the Cantors Assembly in 1949. It analyzes the evolution of hazzanut from the old-fashioned *zogahts* (meticulous treatment of each word as a separate musico-rhetorical entity) to a more modern style that features “*the long singing phrase*.” Yet he cautions that as one sings longer and more musically complex phrases, one must carefully guard the grammatical syntax of the prayer texts, lest a prayers’ meaning be lost in the quest for musical purpose alone:

It is of special importance in the modern Conservative and Reform congregation that the hazzan make an effort to utilize the correct nusah [particularly] in those synagogues where the service is largely a silent one, where praying is done *b’lahash*. In such places of worship, where a vociferous, ecstatic religious spirit is missing, it becomes the duty of the hazzan to bring our *nus’haot* to light, otherwise there is the risk that many of our most traditional melodies may be forgotten because of disuse.

Back in the mid-20th century, Adolph Katchko was thinking about the same issues that concern hazzanim today. The book has included all of the musical examples that he used to illustrate this lecture.



Figure 1. Adolph Katchko being “coached” by Zavel Kwartin in White Sulphur Springs, NY.

A voice as fully resonant as Katchko's would normally not lend itself to intricate coloratura. Its extraordinary flexibility, however, enabled him to negotiate such passages flawlessly and tastefully. Katchko's virtuosity made him comfortable in either the Orthodox or Reform style of service, and his *hazzanut* was highly regarded in all the main branches of American Judaism. His New York synagogue was among the ten percent of Conservative congregations that employed an organ during regular worship and not just at wedding services. With or without instrumental accompaniment, Adolph Katchko was beloved by his students at Hebrew Union College's School for Sacred Music, where he served as a founding faculty member. His congregants revered him, as did countless visitors from afar who came to participate in his dignified davening.

Deborah Katchko Gray has wisely set her grandfather's compositions in lower keys, to make them more accessible for medium-range voices. Male as well as female cantors will find this helpful, especially since the settings include simple guitar chords. The author writes that she has found this kind of accompaniment an effective way to demonstrate the modernity and accessibility of her grandfather's music for contemporary synagogue goers.

Some of the compositions transcribed in this book have never before been published, among them: Psalm 23, *Y'hi ratson* for Rosh Hodesh, *Kiddush* for Rosh Hashanah, and *V'shamru* for Shabbat. These prayer settings were transmitted to Deborah through her father, Theodore Katchko, whose singing, along with the author's, is also represented on the CD. That is what makes this collection a representation of three generations of Katchko *hazzanut*, for it includes the singing of Hazzanim Adolph Katchko from the 1940s, Theodore Katchko—a bass-baritone like his father—during the 1980s-and-90s, and mezzo-soprano Deborah Katchko Gray in the present day. Spanning seven decades, the recordings will enable serious students and lovers of *hazzanut* to discern echoes of the chant style that was imported from Eastern Europe, along with adaptations to American congregations' preferences after WWII, and amalgamation with the more rhythmic folk-ballad approach of today's liturgical music.

Adolph Katchko had masterfully crafted a cantorial line that blended the introspective *zogakhts* style with an outgoing *long singing line*, always in service of the text. Take, for instance, the signature Psalm of Friday night, *Adonai Malakh* ("God Reigns"; **Example 1**, next page).

The Psalm's opening (lines 1-2) consists of three short phrases containing three words each. A subsequent single longer phrase of five words (line 2) counterbalances the three initial shorter ones with a jubilant trumpet call leading to the climactic word *atah* ("You"; referring to the Eternal One). Lines

Adonai malakh

(Psalm 93)

Text: Friday Night Liturgy

Original Key—Capo 4

Recording—Capo 1

Music: Adolph Katchko

1 A - do-nai ma - lakh_ gei-ut la - veish la-veish a-do-nai oz_ hit - az -

2 zar_ af tik - kon tei - veil_ bal_ tim - mot._

3 Na-khon kis - a - kha_ mei - az, mei - o - lam_ a - tah.

4 Na - s' - u n' - ha - rot a - do - nai_ na - s' - u n' - ha - rot_ ko - lam,

5 yis - u n' ha - rot_ dokh - yam. Mik - ko -

6 lot ma - yim rab - bim ad - di - rim_ mish - b' - rei - yam,

7 ad - dir_ bam - ma - rom a - do - nai. Ei - do - te -

8 kha ne - em - nu_ m' - od l' - veit - kha na - a - vah ko - desh,

9 a - do - nai l' - o - rek h ya - mim.

10 *ossia* l' - o - rek h ya - mim.

Example 1. Adolph Katchko's combination of *zogakhtsn* with *long singing phrases*.

3-4 re-use the pattern: three short phrases of three words each. This time they center around chromatically lowered 7th and 6th degrees (C, Bb), before resolving in an extended cadence on the tonic (D). This opening section can be seen as a modernization of the *zogakhts* approach; tone-painting short phrases—rather than individual words—in sequence, while maintaining an overarching form of antecedent-and-consequent half-verses.

Line 5 brings into play a *long singing phrase*. It visits the 4th degree (G). Its six words are answered by a shorter phrase (line 6) whose three words bloom melismatically to depict the awesome might of God on high (*adir ba-marom adonai*). Line 8 returns to the original tonality (D) via a leap to the octave (D)—Katchko’s heroic upper-middle register—on the final word. The composition ends in the welcoming calm of Kabbalat Shabbat nusah with two so-called “*Mi-Sinai* Tunes.” These pertain to sacred melodic fragments so old that Ashkenazic synagogue tradition venerates them as if they were given to Moses at Sinai, along with the other Commandments. The two cited here appear on the words *l’rekh yamim* (“God is eternal”). They are the High Holiday “*Aleinu*” motif, and the *t’lishah g’dolah* motif for cantillating Torah. An *Ossia* option for higher voices also cites the latter motif at the octave.

Adolph Katchko’s three-volume *Thesaurus of Cantorial Liturgy—Otsar ha-hazzanut*, published by the Sacred Music Press, continues to be available from Hebrew Union College. It remains a much-sought-after source of material for younger hazzanim, essential to the effective fulfillment of their sacred calling. Similarly indispensable should be this loving documentation of the Master’s tradition, brought to us by Deborah, the third generation of Katchko hazzanim. Her name takes its root, *d-b-r*, from the verb “speak.” Like her namesake, the biblical prophetess who “arose to speak in song,” she has gifted her generation not only with a lasting model of sacred song, but also with the manner in which two preceding generations—her father and grandfather—sang it before God and Israel in prayer.

*Robert S. Scherr is Hazzan Emeritus of Temple Israel in Natick, Massachusetts. He currently serves as the Jewish Chaplain for Williams College in Williamstown, MA, and as Chair of Placement and Human Resources for the Cantors Assembly. His review of Charles Heller’s book, **What To Listen For In Jewish Music**, appeared in the Journal’s 2008 issue.*

Gilgl fun a nign—Cantor Arianne Brown’s CD— *Eternal Flame: A Yiddish Love Story*

A Review/Essay by Gershon Freidlin

Y. L. Peretz—turn-of-the-20th century champion of modernist Yiddish thinking—wrote the story, “Transmigrations of a Tune.” Perching on his shoulders, I need not think myself a chaser after rainbows if I chase down a set of tunes of my choice.

In the first half-century of Yiddish musical theater beginning in Roumania in 1876, and soon branching out to New York, many melodies used in such performances were based upon synagogue modes, and many of the personnel hovering backstage—often on the sneak—were either cantors themselves or their choristers, for all of whom the stage was off-limits.

Today we stand on the other side of a divide; cantors may comfortably immerse themselves in Yiddish theater without having to look over a shoulder. This easing of social tension, I think, must affect the performance of such repertoire by draining much of its life force. Analogously, what would major gay theater lyricists—like Cole Porter or Larry Hart—have written had they been able to reach their heights writing for their personal love preferences? Would we still have known “Night and Day” or “Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered”? To satisfy their public, did they have to turn their own days into night, or bewitch and bewilder their own souls?

By 1930, Yiddish theater compositions were no longer liturgy-based, but were fed by theater conventions other than those of prayer and cantillation. Even when prayer modes were used, the resulting tunes no longer sounded as if derived from synagogue compositions. Thus from early in the decade, “Joe and Paul,” the radio jingle that became the signature song of the Barton Brothers, and “Yidl Mitn Fidl” from later in the decade, were both composed in *Mi shebeirakh* (aka Ukrainian-Dorian), but neither in any way suggests the introduction to the Sabbath *musaf* service where that mode gets its name.

Compare those tunes to a *Mi shebeirakh*-mode composition of a generation earlier: the signature song of the musical comedy star, Ludwig Satz: “Attorney Street.” So *khazonish* is that number, that for a decade I’ve placed the melody right back into the *Mi shebeirakh* prayer when leading services.

Incredulous? Start chanting at the words *V’khol mi she-oskim* and continue to the end, following the Satz classic. As an added bonus, the final sentence—beginning on *V’yishlakh*, makes for easy congregational singing and may be

repeated. Being able to shift the tune to-and-fro from the stage to the *bimah* is the highest test of authenticity of a liturgy-based theater song.

An informant once told me how the Yiddish street used to explode when the stage hit, “Attorney Street,” was heard: the listeners were getting a dose of the Supplementary Sabbath Soul.

Two more liturgy-based Yiddish songs are, “Eli Eli” and “Khosn Kalleh, Mazltov,” both from the 1890s; the former in *Freygish (Ahavah Rabbah)*, the latter in *Mi shebeirakh*. One became a Jewish-outpour standard that reached all the way to Perry Como and Johnny Mathis; the latter, a wedding staple that reached to Julie Andrews in the 1967 film, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Compare their lasting presence to that of the later “Hava Nagilah” that stretched from the prime of Idelsohn to Harry Belafonte to the public address system at Yankee Stadium.

When I heard that a cantor, occupying a major pulpit, who immerses herself in Yiddish—not only in theater, but also, in journalism (Arianne Brown writes an advice column for the weekly Yiddish *Forverts*) has a CD to review—I pounded my desk as I thought: here is a singer who might briefly bring back to Yiddish theater, songs based upon the earlier liturgical base. Recalling the Peretz story, “*A gilgl fun a nign*,” about transmigrating tunes, also fanned my hopes that the encased CD sitting on my desk awaiting its turn on the turntable—I wished—might give us a taste of transmigration.

It does, but not in the way I’d hoped for before listening. With *Eternal Flame*, Cantor Brown does not revive liturgy-based Yiddish theater songs but does show us a voice that could, if it so wished.

The icon of theater songs—oh so Yiddish, yet-non-liturgic based—that in 1932 broke the ground, is Sholom Secunda’s, *Bamir bistu sheyn* (orthography mine). Rather than perform it, Aaron Lebedev, comic dancer and singer, tried to get it excised from the show. That may be worse than the composer’s selling it off for thirty pieces of silver (dollars) to a publisher. Later in the decade, Sammy Cahn translated it into English for Decca Records; Benny Goodman and the Andrew Sisters then sent it to the top of the charts. A good slice of *gilgl* at work there: translation gave the song a life it otherwise would not have had. Still up and running, it is included, in both Yiddish and English, on the Brown CD—in a duet with Mike Burstyn.

The recording under discussion here—a sampler of Yiddish theater love songs from the romantic to the nostalgic for home and mother—shows a voice that sounds so authentic for Yiddish theater that, were I the impresario Boris Thomashefsky (19th-century Khazn Nisse Belzer’s onetime boy so-

prano), I'd cast her, sight unseen, in Yiddish musicals. Where Thomashefsky treads, Ziegfeld from the *Follies* cannot be far behind. And, I'm not jiving the onetime boy soprano from Berdichev. When push came to shove, Sir Bores (tombstone spelling) was no better in holding onto his fortune than America's greatest showman.

Even if the tunes on the CD are not transmigrating, the voice is. Not only is Arianne Brown's vocal timbre authentic for Yiddish musical theater of a few generations ago, it is also better trained than were the voices of the stars there. No screeching or tremolos. The voice goes to the ranges the singer wants it to; her cantorial coloratura—in a brief but forceful passage—flows easily, leaving no doubt that at least some females do more than give credit to what had been male repertoire.

Where is the cantor to go in thinned-out Yiddish musical theater with that lyric-coloratura soprano? Current offerings—may their tribe increase—cater to two groups. The first consists of those in whom a vein of nostalgia may be reached. The second are those, like Russian immigrants, feeling for so long deprived by Soviet captivity, who are open to any Yiddish sound, but it needs be elementary. Sing for these two groups, of course, but also find a place in the cosmos where Yiddish theater song may explode, or break through, if you prefer a milder term.

My own breakthrough with Yiddish theater song came in 1978, when Nahma Sandrow, author of *Vagabond Stars*—a history of international Yiddish theater—asked me to come on as a consultant to a play using the title of her book on a show she was producing with the Berkshire Theater Festival in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Staged as a “documentary” on American Yiddish musical theater, it would combine songs and skits, all in English. The entire Yiddish theater repertoire was culled for the best that could work in translation.

Speak of transmigration: *Vagabond Stars* showed what was both forceful and entertaining in its area of focus. It suggested—as with Secunda's *Bamir bistu sheyn*—that translation is more than a vital organ transplant, but rather, the most appropriate incarnation for this time.

The translated material I heard in *Vagabond Stars* made its way inside my brain and repeatedly sent me back to hear and learn the original. Two examples. In a movie, the aforementioned Ludwig Satz performed a lecherous patter song, *Gitte vaybele* (“Accommodating Woman”)—the lyrics of which, in *Vagabond Stars*, were not among the most effective of the translations used there. But the original, with my own English-language substitutions for the

bridge, did work—coming from the mouth of Haman as he mounted Esther’s couch to plead for his life.

Earlier in the *Esther* text, as women were vetted for the position of Queen, we heard the Chief Eunuch, as he rejected candidates with, “She’s Missing the Cherry on the Top”—translated from the Yiddish, *S’felt ir di rozhinke* (lit., she’s missing the raisin). Years later, for my own pleasure, I learned the original, sung by Molly Picon, music by Joseph Rumshinsky.

This uniting theater song with sacred text soon led—with the help of a major collaborator—to *Living Midrash* ensembles. In these, interpolated song and skits were joined to our holiday or seasonal recitation of *Esther*, *Song of Songs*, *Ruth*, and *Ecclesiastes*, to create a theater presentation of sacred texts, using both the original and the translation.

For me, both *Vagabond Stars* and *Living Midrash* showed theatrical explosiveness—or, what the ‘twenties theater critic Gilbert Seldes called the “demonic,” a trait he applied to performers like Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor and Fannie Brice. When commercial Yiddish theater existed here roughly between 1890 and 1950, it collectively showed an over-the-top intensity, which is what we might expect. Given that those years covered East European Jewish (and other) immigration, social restructuring on the grandest scale; our theater reflected the energy of that era.

Thus, to portray that theater authentically, a demonic quality must be there; toned down won’t do. Cantor Arianne Brown has it in her to express that.

There is one transmigrating tune I’d like to have heard among the love songs offered on the cantor’s CD—one that for me provides a twist on Yiddish tune transmigration. I’d like to have heard a peppy love duet unfortunately named, “Yok Tshok Tshok,” an expletive used by The Three Stooges. The song was originally performed by sometime cantor/sometime musical showman, Moishe Oysher, with Florence Weiss (his paramour). It begins, *Mayn neshomele; mayn harts, mayn neshomele* (My solace; my heart and my soul).

Stop the music! Did Oysher not only abscond with Weiss’s wife, but also hit on the lyrics of Hoagy Carmichael’s great hit? “Heart and Soul”—lyrics by Frank Loesser—had appeared in the mid-1930s, shortly before the Oysher song. Its piano version would have reached the ears of every first-generation American Jew. Its sound, especially for the left hand, came to define pop, hence, became an aid to assimilation.

(Could the alleged heist have come from the other direction? The Hoagster might have heard at least a few words of Yiddish from his lyricist for “Stardust,” Mitchell Parish, which he then handed over to Loesser.)

For me, *Mayn nekhomele* has a history, going back a dozen years, then on to my childhood. In 1999 I was working as editor with Mike Burstyn and his mother, Lillian Lux Burstein, on her English-language version of an autobiography of their Yiddish musical theater family, *What a Life!* (Syracuse University Press, 2003). While listening to about everything the family had recorded, Oysher's "*Mayn nekhomele*" popped up, performed by the then-teenage Burstyn twins—the she of whom performed with the family till she wed.

Overjoyed was I at hearing the song, I asked Mike to please re-record it. It has charm when sung by adept teenagers, but it sounds best from the mouth of a mature man with his Fedora cocked over one eye (Frank Sinatra, anyone?).

Mike answered with what I took for a "Yeah, yeah," for which I had no rejoinder. After all, I'd not suggested a duet partner. Nor do I have to, now. On her CD, Cantor Brown sings a few numbers with Mike. They don't need me to introduce one to the other; they've taken care of that. Now he has the right partner—and no excuse not to re-record *Mayn nekhomele*.

My own connection to the song: The only Yiddish song that I remember from childhood, on a 78 rpm recording, is the Oysher/Weiss *Mayn nekhomele*. I had listened to it repeatedly as a youngster and even made up my own scat lyrics to it. In those days—before the Sexual Revolution—romance was the perfume breathed and inhaled by every American. It included couple-dancing where each half of the couple had easy hand/eye contact with the other; mouths would seek to declare love overflowing; such was the privilege of Americans of all races, creeds and colors. Each potential romancer rejoiced in the easy access to soap, hot-and-cold running water and clothes that graced the body. The romantic aura of the times was ascribed to the young—not what we would associate with a mature Yiddish-speaking man, even if his Fedora was set at the proper, raunchy angle. That Oysher made such a vital impression on one who breathed the culture of the day was an achievement.

I believe there to have been for me a *gilgl* process at work that eased my acceptance of the singer's sentiments. A few years before I first heard the Oysher song, another song was broadcast over the radio—beginning with the words, "I've got spurs that jingle jangle jingle, as I go riding merrily along." They were twanged by movie cowboy, Gene Autry, later known for his "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Radio was for me the real *kol d'mamah dakkah*, the still, small [Heavenly] voice.

Then, a decade ago, in preparation for giving workshops on the crossover of musical motifs from shul to stage, I listened repeatedly to both the Oysher (the young Burstyn-twins' version) and Autry songs, and heard a strong me-

lodic connection between them. When, in preparation for this review/essay I listened to Arianne Brown sing with Mike Burstyn on her CD, I wished that the duo had also re-recorded Oysher-and-Weiss's love chant from Brooklyn, *erev* WWII.

Khazn Arianne Brown has a voice with *k'fitses haderekh*—it flies on air: wherever she sends it, it goes. She is one to tastefully tackle musical migrations across languages, eras and cultures. On *Eternal Flame* we hear that voice.

A frequent contributor, Rabbi Gershon Freidlin, Pittsburgh, serves on the Journal's Editorial Board. In 1999, Freidlin developed a Jewish Community-sponsored lecture, "Blues Scale and the Cantor's Wail," into a series of workshops at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. His most recent JSM article, "Som Fon Iz Shlekht?!—In Praise of a Cutting-Edge Cat," appeared in the Fall 2010 issue.

Ladislav Moshe Blum's Double-CD Retrospective

Reviewed by Robert Brody

Ladislav Moshe Blum served as Chief Cantor at Prague's Jerusalem Synagogue from 1961 to 1994 when, on his way to conduct a service at the age of 83, he was hit by a car and expired shortly afterwards. He had lived through the difficult times of communism when those openly associating themselves with religious practice could easily experience huge problems. Therefore, he pursued a professional career as opera singer in order to gain an official and obligatory "proof of employment."

He was born in 1911, his father a shopkeeper from an Orthodox family, and his mother from a Neolog (Moderate Reform) background. The Neolog movement tried to combine Traditional Judaism with Western European philosophies. Many of the large European synagogues that survived the second World War were associated with this movement. They generally boasted a grand architectural design, often in Moorish style, and incorporated pipe organs that were routinely used in services.

From the first notes of these recordings Cantor Blum's voice shows a distinctiveness that is reminiscent of an age long gone. Despite a large tonal range, Blum featured a predominantly countertenor register. Only a few cantors have used this style of Bel Canto head-voice reminiscent of a female sound. That is because according to Orthodox ruling the female voice cannot be heard during public prayer. Fortuitously, Blum's congregation followed a more Liberal path.

The album provides an informative booklet containing background history of the recordings. It also includes a fascinating biography of Cantor Blum—which lay dormant for many years until now—written by Veronika Seidlova, who edited the recordings. There is also a detailed commentary on the repertoire and performance written by Alexander Knapp, a professor of Jewish Music at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

CD 1 has 14 tracks totaling an hour's listening. They begin with Blum singing *Amar rabbi elazar* by Yossele Rosenblatt (1882-1933), in which he demonstrates the flexibility and range of his voice, effortlessly touching top D with a fluent coloratura. Three compositions recorded by Mordechai Hershman (1888-1940) follow: *Atah yatsarta* and *Mitratseh b'rah'amim* (composers unattributed), and *Sheva b'rakhot* by Eliyahu Schnipelisky

(1879-1947). An array of other well-known cantors and composers are represented: *Birkhat kohanim* and *Adonoi malakh* as recorded by Moshe Koussevitzky (1899-1966), *L'eil barukh*, *Yir'u eineinu* and *R'tseih vimnu-hateinu* by Sholom Secunda (1894-1975), *Sh'ma yisrael* and *K'dushah* by Leib Glantz (1898-1964). Three other liturgical selections of unknown origin appear, including Kol Nidre.

It can only be due to the Neolog nature of the services at the Jerusalem Synagogue that the second CD proves so very interesting, for it offers live recordings of services on Erev Shabbat, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. They document that a close adherence to Eastern European prayer modes (*nusah*) existed even in the Neolog worship rite. The Rosh Hashanah Eve paragraph-endings are in a style which is completely traditional and similar to what is sung by Orthodox congregations in Great Britain, Canada and the United States—minus the organ accompaniment.

Some may find aspects of the vocal quality disconcerting. There is frequent variation from a pleasing *mezza voce* in the middle and lower ranges to a falsetto quality in the upper register that might prove a bit wearing if listened to all day on Yom Kippur. Nonetheless, the CD set's value lies specifically in its revelation of the range of voices and styles that the art and practice of *hazzanut* has encompassed.

The double-CD set is available through the e-shop of the Prague Jewish Museum (<http://www.jewishmuseurn.cz/shop/ashop.htm>).

When Dr. Robert Brody is not pursuing his career as a dentist he is likely to be preparing for appearances as a tenor onstage, or to be leading services at his local synagogue in Kenton, London or elsewhere. A graduate of both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, Robert has sung as concert soloist and hazzan in Roumania, Russia, Turkey, the Czech Republic and Israel. Several of his recorded tracks can be heard on www.youtube.com and at the various on-line Jewish Music collection websites.

Leo Zeitlin: Chamber Music

Edited by Paula Eisenstein Baker and Robert S. Nelson

A-R Editions, Inc., 2008, 199 pages

Reviewed by Charles Heller

In 1908, a group of Jewish musicians in St. Petersburg, led by Joel Engel and others, and encouraged by Rimsky-Korsakov, got together to form the Society for Jewish Folk Music. Their aim was to explore Jewish folk music and use this material as a basis for the creation of original artistic works of the highest quality. Although the Society only existed for about ten years, it produced an astonishing repertoire that inspires artists to this very day, including works by Achron, Krein and others.

The volume under review is an exhaustive collection of the chamber works (scored for piano, strings and voice, including a cappella choir) of one of these St. Petersburg composers, Leo Zeitlin (1884-1930). Zeitlin studied with Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov. After holding positions in Russia and Poland, settled in the United States in 1923, where he worked for radio and theater orchestras. His biography gives a vivid picture of a musician's life at that time: music was a ticket out of the ghetto, and emigration meant leaving a land where there was no heat, no food and no paper—not to mention the ever-present fear of conscription—for a two-story house in Queens, NY and a regular paycheck.

Editors Baker and Nelson have gone to extraordinary lengths to collect every stray manuscript of the composer, all neatly edited, organized and typeset. There is a voluminous introduction, almost a dissertation in itself, about the composer, the St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Folk Music, and the nature of the compositions. Unfortunately, not all this scholarship is entirely reliable—we might mention here the background notes to the setting of the “Kaddish of Reb Levi Yitskhok,” which completely misunderstand its liturgical setting and meaning—and the analysis of the *Ahavah rabbah* mode, which ignores the fact that it cannot be rendered as a single-octave scale but has significantly altered pitches beyond either end of the mode's central octave.

The book comprises 27 selections, some in alternative settings. Here are some of the highlights:

Eli tsiyon for cello and piano (based not on our familiar Western Ashkenazic tune, but on a tune collected by Zisman Kiselgof). The piece was so admired that Joseph Achron published a version for virtuoso violin;

a fine setting of *Zog zhe, rebenyu* (a colorful folk song about the messianic times);

re-arrangements of works by others, in particular Nowakowsky's beautiful *Shir ha-shirim* (*Kol dodi*).

There are also selections in a dramatic style known as *melodeklamatsiia*, poetic declamations over a musical background. One selection is in Russian, with some in Yiddish.

This collection will be of great value to artists planning concerts around the incredible repertoire of the Society for Jewish Folk Music. I feel compelled, however, to draw attention to an editorial quirk in this volume which will annoy any singer who wants to perform these pieces. This is the use of separate notes for separate syllables (the note-tails not being beamed together). It is regrettable that the editors have adopted this archaic style as deliberate policy (p.188). Although often encountered in modern publications, it is one of several impractical devices that were eliminated by Arnold Schoenberg in his notational reforms. I took the trouble of contacting the editors to ask why they had adopted this user-unfriendly style in a publication designed to get the music out of the library and into the concert hall, but am still waiting for an answer.

*Charles Heller recently retired after 30 years as choir director at Beth Emeth Synagogue, Toronto. His review of Cantor Louis Danto's 4-CD Retrospective Album and Music Collection appeared in the Fall 2010 Journal; his most recent book is **What To Listen For in Jewish Music** (www.ecanthuspress.com).*



Subject: How I Discovered the Glory That Was Glantz

March 15, 2010

A year ago a close friend of mine lost her son, who also happened to be quite close with my own son. It was a very painful period for me. Eleven months later another friend and colleague, Cantor Susan Wehle, died in a tragic commuter plane crash near Buffalo. I was experiencing an existential crisis. Aware that this crisis could become a serious distracting force, I determined not to take my sacred calling for granted. Instead, I renewed my formal studies, this time with a new mentor—Cantor Benjamin Maissner of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto. For seven months our study sessions revolved around Jewish music history, Hebrew language, polishing nusah and above all, tales about the *Golden Age* cantors who flourished from the teens through the sixties of the past century.

Fortunately, my synagogue graciously allows me to take *Shabbat Shuvah* off, and I availed myself of the opportunity to attend services at Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple with my mother and my husband. After experiencing the depth and variety of Beny's davening, we were invited to Shabbat lunch at home with him and his lovely wife, Hope. As we sat around the Maissners' dining room table, Beny began describing with incredible enthusiasm his wonderful memories as a child of ten, listening to Leib Glantz daven his acclaimed (and since recorded) Midnight S'lⁱhot service in Tel Aviv's *Tiferet tsvi* Synagogue. I couldn't take my eyes off Beny as he described how Glantz appeared to him larger than life. I was intrigued. Beny was speaking about this Glantz person more fondly, fervently and intensely than I had ever heard anyone describe another individual.

I wasted no time in ordering *The Man Who Spoke To God*, a substantial book with two accompanying CDs edited and published by Leib Glantz's son, Jerry. The morning after it arrived I loaded both compact disks into my iPod, and began my morning jog. As I listened to the music, my stride became faster and I could feel the pounding of my heart. I actually heard my pulse as I ran on the asphalt. The composition *L'khu n'ran'nah* was playing, sung in the most beautifully pure tenor I had ever heard. Suddenly, without warning, I succumbed to what had been steadily building up inside me. Right there, on

the side of the road, I cried my heart out, shoulders heaving, unable to catch my breath! I had an epiphany—a moment of sudden revelation. After what had seemed like an eternity following the tragic losses of the past year, I once again felt what I can only call God's *Presence* return within me. It took a long time for me to pull myself together and continue on my run.

Since then I have been listening to Glantz every day—several times a day. Every track presents a new gift waiting to be unwrapped. I still cannot fathom how one human, one man, could produce such exquisite phrasing, such tenderness in his delivery, such vocal agility. He was evidently not a person to go with the norms, and I've gotten to love the less "popular" of his pieces—the ones just melting with Hasidic fervor. I want to fall to my knees and weep when I hear *Ki hineih ka-homer* from Yom Kippur Eve. That one phrase—"*Kein anahnu, kein anahnu, anahnu, anahnu b'yodkha*"—reconnects with *Hashem* in an instant. Above all, Glantz's *d'veikut*, his unadulterated devotion to the Divine, is the one aspect of his persona that I admire the most. Like many hazzanim who are sucked into the banality of their congregation's agenda and therefore unable to perform their davening as an authentic spiritual experience, I have to constantly remind myself of Glantz's eloquent words: "I am more fearful of God than of my critics!" I think of Glantz every time I approach the Amud to officiate; his presence is with me every time I open my mouth to cue my congregation—and to be cued by them in return.

As my appreciation of Glantz grows, I have sadly come to recognize the inevitable reality about my generation of hazzanim. I am troubled that the cantorate's *Golden Age* is irrevocably over, never to return again. The only way I can distantly connect to it is through written articles and remastered recordings of those legendary *Anshei emunah*—"Men of Great Faith"—as the old *S'lihot* liturgy has it. Luckily, my own mentor, Cantor Maissner, offers a direct link back to at least one—perhaps the noblest—of those outstanding Eastern European hazzanim. Moreover, he inspires me to feel that in my own small way I must strive to help keep alive the *spirit* of that bygone era. I am optimistic that it can be done if we continually revisit and try to incorporate usable elements from the works of those immortal cantors and composers. I am sure that new hazzanim with talent and *kavvanah* will emerge, not to take the place of their matchless predecessors—but to keep alive into perpetuity even an occasional glimpse of the *Golden Age* and the geniuses it produced—like Leib Glantz.

Penny S. Myers
Buffalo, New York

Subject: Thoughts on Hearing the CA's Emunat Abba CD

1) A Grandson's Response

April 5, 2009

I cannot tell how many times I've listened to the Jubilee recording of my grandfather Abba Weisgal's davening... Last night I lay in bed for an hour, first with chills from hearing Abba's voice and then with tears streaming down my face... *Hodu l'adonai, Hu eloheinu*, even the *Amidah* repetition... And my father Hugo in the background... even Abba's 30 seconds of urging a Bar Mitzvah boy to "practice, practice, practice"... It's just wonderful...

Abba soaring above the choir and congregation in *Ashamnu* makes me shiver... his voice must span three octaves. And of course, all that is mixed with the image of my uncle Freddie taking the tzitzit of his tallit and beating the breast of the bass next to him while we sang this... Hugo would have said of the recording: "It's worth all of Freddie's bad jokes!"

Jonathan M. Weisgal, Esq.

Bethesda, MD

2) A Former CA President's Reaction

October 13, 2009

Abba Weisgal certainly knew his stuff—this recording is a revelation! If he were a tenor—he would have been counted among the *gdolim*—like Moishe Oysher, with whom I sang as a boy all over New York. On the "Pesach" tracks of this recording he packed more davening into the *Amidah* repetition—in less time—than anyone I can think of. That includes the legendary Berele Chagy, who was Senior Cantor during the eight years I served as alto soloist in Ben Friedman's choir at Temple Beth El of Borough Park.

The only other person I can think of who davened in the same *parlando* style was the dramatic tenor Avraham Shapiro of Newark, New Jersey. What I notice above all with Weisgal is that he's extremely fluent, and doesn't let the words get in the way of his vocal line. Yet, it's obvious from his singing that he knows the meaning of every word. I'm a New Yorker who has heard

the best, but I'd never heard anyone who does what Weisgal did at the Amud on this commemorative CD.

Sol Mendelson

Lido Beach, NY

3) Another Former CA President's Reaction

November 7, 2009

I just finished listening to the CD and feel compelled to write about this treasure trove of masterful davening uncovered by the CA. The *character* of this man's delivery of nusah is astonishing; it cannot be taught, it must be ingested. I would recommend to anyone approaching this recorded collection for the first time to open a siddur and listen to track 11 (Repetition of the Festival Amidah). I did so, and I feel both transformed and liberated. Saying the words with such speed and accuracy is a perfect answer to today's time constraints.

Then there are tracks 14 through 16 (Megillah Reading). Weisgal's amazing declamatory rendition of the Esther story, I believe, gives us a glimpse into a European experience that has been lost. Every time I listen to the various tracks I learn something new.

Jack Mendelson

White Plains, NY

Subject: Setting the Record Straight on Pioneering Women Conservative Cantors

January 16, 2011

This is a belated effort to rectify what I'm certain was an inadvertent omission in JSM 2007, which told the story of how and when women were first engaged as cantors in American Conservative synagogues. With all due modesty, I believe that my career has played a significant part in that story, and I write to ensure that it is preserved.

I was born in Los Angeles to Cantor Israel and Jeanne Reich, my father then serving the Breed Street Shul (Orthodox) in Boyle Heights, now a Na-

tional Landmark site. He would later be engaged as cantor at two Conservative synagogues: Temple Emanuel in Miami Beach, and Temple Shalom in San Francisco, where I grew up. After majoring in Music at California State University, I applied to Temple Beth Zion in Los Angeles, a Conservative congregation looking for a cantor. I was familiar with their liturgical repertoire and customs, having already led services there on occasion. I applied on my own, without any academic training in the profession, since women were not yet accepted as cantorial candidates at JTS. I, along with my brothers Barry and Brian, had sung in our father's choir, conducted it, and assisted him during High Holidays. Our father was very supportive of my application for the Beth Zion position, despite the negative advice of all our friends, because "I was a woman."

I believed I had a calling and feel for this *m'lekheth ha-kodesh*, and went through with the audition. In February of 1978 I was accepted as Cantor by Rabbi Edward Tennenbaum (z"l), who also functioned as Executive Director of the United Synagogue's Pacific Southwest Region. My hiring was considered notable enough to make all the local newspapers, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Daily News* and *Jewish Journal*, as well as the nightly TV news. Rabbi Tennenbaum told me later that he agreed to grant me an audition partly because he had three daughters of his own. The Temple's Board decided to engage me as Cantor because they evidently liked what they referred to as my "authentic" style of davening.

That same spring I attended my first Cantors Assembly convention, at Grossinger's Resort in the Catskills, with my Dad. When he introduced me to his colleagues and I told them I held a cantorial pulpit, they assumed it was Reform. They were understandably shocked when I explained that it was a Conservative congregation; the only other two women I met there that year were serving Reconstructionist and Reform synagogues. With the foolhardy courage that Heaven seems to reserve for children, simpletons and my generation of women cantors, I got up and sang at the late-evening "open mike" sessions. Over the ensuing years many women cantors, one of whom now teaches at JTS, have told me that they remembered my singing at those impromptu convention sessions and that it had inspired them to persevere in their own careers. I am most proud of having provided an accessible role model for them—without even realizing it at the time.

It is also my privilege to represent the fifth consecutive generation of cantors in my family. During the 1980s and 1990s my father, my brothers (both Reform cantors in the Bay Area) and I concertized extensively, and recorded an album titled *The Reich Family—Cantors Four*. Now that our father is

gone, we still concertize—with the substitution of my daughter Rachel (who possesses a beautiful operatic soprano voice)—calling ourselves “The Reich Family, Cantors 3 Plus 1.” Rachel became the sixth-generation cantor in our family last year when she was engaged by Temple Rodeph Shalom in Redondo Beach. She plans to pursue the full-time cantorate as a career after finishing college, currently tutoring B’nei/B’not Mitzvah at Conservative Congregation Adat Ari El of North Hollywood in her “spare” time.

To complete this brief biographical sketch of a colleague who was arguably the first Woman Conservative Cantor (Elaine Shapiro, the first woman graduate from JTS’s College of Music, followed my example a year later—in 1979—at Temple Beth El in West Palm Beach, Florida). I’d also like to add the following postscript: In 1996 I was awarded the Diploma of Hazzan Minister from JTS, having fulfilled the necessary requirements and passed a comprehensive examination. That same year I was accepted for membership in the Cantors Assembly—almost two decades after assuming my first pulpit. Along the way, I studied with these three hazzanic masters: My father Israel Reich, Cantor Alan Michaelson (z”l), and Cantor William Sharlin, without whose mentoring and support I could never have attained my lifelong goal. On the personal level, I have been married to Philip Freed for 22 years. Besides my daughter Rachel, I have four step-children and four step-grandchildren.

If asked to impart one lasting piece of advice to the next generation of Women Conservative Cantors, I would tell them: while moving forward to embrace the more ‘modern’ composers of Jewish music, never forget the rich (no pun intended) tradition of the Great Ones who came before us. The Golden Age of Hazzanut is to the cantorate what Mozart and Beethoven are to secular music—its heart and soul—and must not be ignored. Listening to the Masters of that era will only make us better at our profession.

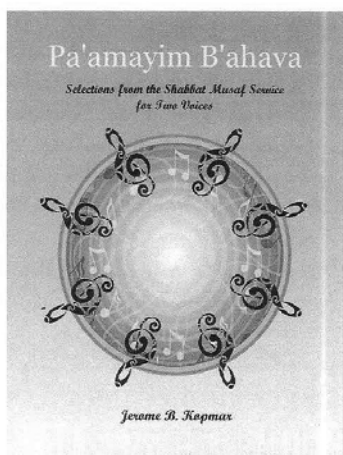
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The *Journal* no longer charges for subscriptions—because its *raison d'être* has always been to elevate the standards of Jewish liturgical music and to aid cantors and synagogue musicians in furthering that endeavor. By eliminating cost as a factor, the Cantors Assembly hopes to put this scholarly publication into more hands individually, and collectively via institutional libraries.

Current and past issues from 1967-2003 are now accessible online through a "**Journal of Synagogue Music / Convention Proceedings**" link on the Cantors Assembly website (cantors.org). Printed back-issues from 2005-2010 may be ordered prepaid in minimum lots of five @ \$25 a copy, including postage, from the Cantors Assembly (caoffice@aol.com), using VISA, AMEX, DISCOVER or MASTER cards.



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